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"Woven Alike with Meaning": Sovereignty and Form in Native North American Poetry, 1800-1910

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"Woven Alike with Meaning": Sovereignty and Form in Native North American Poetry, 1800-1910

by

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Dedication

For my family.

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"Woven Alike with Meaning": Sovereignty and Form in Native North American Poetry, 1800-1910

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The story of American poetry has developed *alongside* the idea of America itself, becoming almost synonymous with national sovereignty projects in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During this time the figure of the Indian was, in poetry, customarily depicted as melancholy and moribund, a noble savage making way for a supposedly superior civilization and race. Yet indigenous North American poets also composed and published poetry and participated in reading communities during this time. Examining this poetry reveals how indigenous writers manipulated poetic genres to contest U.S. hegemony and assert sovereignties from the sexual to the tribal to the national. Indeed, understanding early indigenous poets' formal choices and poetic communities challenges critical narratives of American poetry's history as having been linear and progressive, demanding a new way of organizing the study of American poetry.

In this dissertation, I argue that early Native North American poets chose to write in specific poetic genres in response to local, national, and international publishing worlds. Each chapter examines how indigenous poets comment on the practice and form

of poetry, thus speaking to a diverse community of poets and readers through a variety of verse traditions. Jane Johnston Schoolcraft draws from multiple cultural traditions as she manipulates time and genre through her mourning poems, ballads, and lyrics in the Anishinaabe world of the Great Lakes. In the Chicago area, Simon Pokagon uses insurgent practices of appropriation to criticize and revise colonialist American poetry through cross-racial citations and borrowings in his birchbark pamphlets and novel. As public literary tastes shift from poems to legends at the turn of the twentieth century, E. Pauline Johnson helps invent a different kind of modernist poetry that challenges representations of indigenous peoples as pre-modern. Alex Posey composes skeptical elegies, dialect poems, and political newspaper verse from western and Creek literary forms in Indian Territory to heal a divided Creek Nation, practicing poetic appropriations that offered ways of relating to genre that remain powerful for Native American poets today.

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Introduction

On October 13, 1886, Mohawk writer E. Pauline Johnson joined Six Nations leaders from Canada and the United States, police officers, firefighters, Masons, Odd Fellows, foresters, church choirs, and local politicians for the unveiling of a monument to the Mohawk leader Joseph Brant, in the city of Brantford's Victoria Square. Johnson's grandfather, John "Smoke" Johnson, who had met Brant as a boy and fought with him as a Loyalist during the American Revolution, had died just two weeks before. On the day of the unveiling, as a parade marched through the streets of Brantford to Victoria Square, Johnson metaphorically stepped into her grandfather's shoes and literally assumed his name.[1]

As the statue of Brant and the accompanying Six Nations figures and bas reliefs were unveiled, Johnson joined local notables on the platform in a fashionable fur-trimmed suit and hat. Brantford businessman and aspiring politician William Foster Cockshutt introduced Johnson to the crowd and read her poem, "Ode to Brant." Cockshutt's introduction situated Johnson's poem as evidence of her womanly refinement and the Six Nations' literary capabilities. "Ode to Brant" was proof that "our Six Nations are capable of fine literary culture and fully able to handle the pen as well as the sword." Using the language of a priest performing a religious sacrifice, Cockshutt concluded, "This ode is offered to the public as a souvenir of this day."[2] After the reading, Johnson presented the first broadside copy of her poem to the Lieutenant Governor's wife and was offered a bouquet of flowers.[3]

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[1] Charlotte Gray, *Flint and Feather: The Life and Times of E. Pauline Johnson, Tekahionwake* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2002), 90-91; Betty Keller, *Pauline: A Biography of Pauline Johnson* (Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 1981), 46-49; Sheila M.F. Johnston, *Buckskin and Broadcloth: A Celebration of E. Pauline Johnson Tekahionwake, 1861-1913* (Toronto: National Heritage Books, 1997), 70-73.
[2] Keller, *Pauline*, 48.
[3] Ibid., 48-49.

At first glance, Johnson's composition of "Ode to Brant" and its recitation during the Brant Monument unveiling lends itself to the vanishing Indian paradigm fantasized by white settlers in Canada and the United States. Yet attention to Johnson's literary and performative decisions reveals a different story of early indigenous poets' engagement with the national myths constructed through poetry about indigenous peoples during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the wake of her grandfather's recent death, the Brant Monument unveiling presented the young Mohawk poet with a unique opportunity to market her poetry and create a public persona. The Brant Memorial Association commissioned and copyrighted Johnson's poem and offered it for sale during the Brantford celebration as a souvenir broadside titled "'Brant': A Memorial Ode." On the broadside, Johnson added to her own name the moniker, "Tekahionwake," the personal name of her recently deceased grandfather. The *Brantford Expositor* enthuses of the broadside poem, "It is cleverly written, and evidences true poetic genius, and will no doubt meet with a ready sale, as a most appropriate souvenir of the occasion."[4] Johnson's gift of the poem to the Lieutenant Governor's wife, in this context, was less a ritual offering than a clever marketing move by the author to demonstrate the value of her printed poem as a keepsake of the Brant monument unveiling.[5]

Johnson's decisions to allow her poem to be read and published as a souvenir of the Brant Monument and to adopt her grandfather's Mohawk name demonstrate her understanding of late nineteenth-century desires and assumptions about Indian souvenirs and poems. This honed marketing strategy combines with the poem's celebration of indigenous friendship to build Johnson's readership among Canadians through a shared history of loyalty to the British Crown.

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[4] Johnston, *Buckskin and Broadcloth*, 72.

[5] Veronica Strong-Boag and Carole Gerson, *E. Pauline Johnson, Tekahionwake: Collected Poems and Selected Prose* (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 293.

Johnson begins the ode with an image of Canadian dominance and indigenous decline: "Young Canada with mighty force sweeps on / To gain in power and strength, before the dawn / That brings another era; when the sun / Shall rise again, but only shine upon / Her Indian graves, and Indian memories."[6] Canadian Confederation had taken place just under twenty years before, when the British North American colonies were united into a federation that on July 1, 1867 became the Dominion of Canada, a self-governing colony of the British Empire. During this time of post-Confederation Canadian nationalism, Johnson repeatedly allied herself with the Canadian nationalist cause, even titling her second book *Canadian Born*.

In her memorial ode to Joseph Brant, however, Johnson also asserts a place for indigenous peoples in this new Canadian national history. The ode continues:

> For as the carmine in the twilight skies
> Will fade as night comes on, so fades the race
> That unto Might and therefore Right gives place,
> And as white clouds float hurriedly and high
> Across the crimson of a sunset sky,
> Although their depths are foamy as the snow,
> Their beauty lies in their vermillion glow,
> So Canada, thy plumes were hardly won
> Without allegiance from thy Indian son,
> Thy glories, like the cloud enhance their charm
> With red reflections from the Mohawk's arm.[7]

Rather than lingering on the image of Indian graves and memories, as did so many popular elegies for vanishing Indians, Johnson recalls that Canada, which is to say, Britain, relied on indigenous peoples for military support against the Americans—during the American Revolution, and again during the War of 1812. Johnson's poem also subtly criticizes Canadian colonialism as characterized by the aphorism "might makes right," which she tempers by

[6] Ibid., 21.
[7] Ibid.

likening their relation to clouds during a sunset, wherein the white (settler) clouds gain beauty from their carmine or vermillion background.

Johnson uses this vision of history to argue for the renewal of friendship between Canadian settlers and First Nations peoples. She reasons, "Then meet we as one common Brotherhood, / In peace and love, with purpose understood— / To lift a lasting tribute to the name / Of Brant—who linked his own, with Britain's fame." Indigenous people and Canadian settlers have joined together to memorialize Joseph Brant. Johnson enumerates Brant's actions during and after the Revolutionary War, as he "bade his people leave their valley home…To sweep the tide of home affections back / And love the land where waves the Union Jack." With these words Johnson reminds her audience that Brant's loyalty to Great Britain—to their country—caused the Americans to force the Mohawk out of their homelands. Johnson, however, paints this exodus in a positive light: "What though that home no longer ours! To-day / The Six Red Nations have their Canada, / And rest we here, no cause for us to rise / To seek protection under other skies."[8] Johnson thus shifts the poem from an Indian elegy with its characteristic graves and melancholic tone to a celebration of indigenous survival in Canada through mutual allegiance to Great Britain. Johnson concludes her ode by proclaiming that the Six Nations remain in Canada under the protection of "A hand on which all British subjects lean— / The loving hand of England's Noble Queen." With her presence at the Brant Monument asserting Six Nations survival, Johnson ends the poem with the "encircling," protective hand of the British Queen extending "far across the great Salt Wave" to "guard us from all fear of wrong."[9]

Johnson's poem to Joseph Brant departs from nineteenth-century literary memorials and poetry about dead or dying indigenous peoples, in a poem written for just such a colonial

[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid., 22.

celebration. According to American literary history, poetry became an engine of national sovereignty projects that helped to distinguish and establish national cultures during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Yet as poetry became almost synonymous with national identity, indigenous North Americans turned to poetry for their own purposes. Why did Natives like Johnson also choose to write and publish poetry during this period? And what might exploring that question teach us about the meanings of poetry in North America more broadly?

"Woven Alike with Meaning" answers the question of why indigenous North American writers turned to specific poetic forms in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This study reveals that Native North Americans wrote poetry to contest national sovereignty projects but also to assert sovereignties ranging from sexual to tribal to national. In choosing to compose in specific poetic genres, Native poets creatively responded to national and international literary marketplaces and publication worlds. For instance, indigenous poets wrote elegies that contested and revised the popular vanishing Indian elegies of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These homologous verse traditions flourished across western and American indigenous cultures, indicating that white and indigenous writers have been borrowing, stealing from each other, and collaborating for centuries. Indigenous poets also used poetry in local and intimate ways that complicate the concept of sovereignty as an analytical lens. They wrote poems in private correspondence and fashioned books with special significance and dedications to family and tribal members. Thus, as critics, we need to think more creatively about the stories we tell about poetic genres like the elegy and modes like melancholy and the sentimental in relation to indigenous writing.

American Historical Poetics and Genre Theory

Early Native North American poets chose to write in specific poetic genres in response to local, national, and international publishing worlds. Using formal, bibliographical, and historical methods, "Woven Alike with Meaning" examines the literary choices of nineteenth- to early twentieth-century Native North American poets as they wrote for local, national, and international audiences and publishing worlds from London to Indian Territory. An exercise in historical poetics, it adopts both book historical approaches to the materiality of texts and their circulation and Native Studies methods for engaging tribally specific historical dimensions of early indigenous poetry.

Historical poetics takes its name from a group of scholars studying transatlantic nineteenth-century poetry. This working group formed to "develop methods for reading poems, and poetics, historically" from the nineteenth century's "immense amount of learning around poetics that for complex reasons has largely been forgotten."[10] These scholars believe that the New Critical scholarly reading methods that emerged in the 1930s rendered many nineteenth-century poems "invisible" or "unreadable" to modern readers.[11] As Michael Cohen writes, "poetry is the open secret of American literature: so much of it, so popular, so unread, so seemingly unreadable."[12] In response to this problem, these scholars built upon the idea of genres as "historical agents" to revitalize present-day understandings of poetry's social functions over time, that is, the ways that "people in the past engaged with poems in their daily lives."[13] Historically, these social poetic practices have included "acts of quoting, reciting, memorizing,

[10] Michael Cohen, "Getting Generic: An Introduction," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 71, no. 2 (2016): 150.
[11] Ibid., 154.
[12] Michael Cohen, *The Social Lives of Poems in Nineteenth-Century America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 12.
[13] Cohen, "Getting Generic," 154-155; Cohen, *Social Lives of Poems*, 1-4.

rewriting, parodying, reading collectively, reading aloud, exchanging, scrapbooking, cataloging, editing, anthologizing, and transcribing poems."[14]

Recently, American literature scholars have examined these social applications and practices of poetry as they apply to the development of American poetic genres like the elegy, lyric, and ballad. Max Cavitch argues that the American elegy was central to the emergence of local and national identities in eighteenth-century Anglo-America, as a "highly adaptive discursive resource, not just for mourning the dead but for communicating and managing anxieties in contexts of survival."[15] In this context, nineteenth-century Indian laments or elegies like those of William Cullen Bryant were popular as a "white cultural totem against Indian wrath" about removal. These elegies naturalized the United States government's removal of American Indians as part of an evolutionary order that successively displaced pre-modern peoples.[16] Virginia Jackson tracks the relationship between the lyric genre as a modern mode of literary interpretation and the circulation of Emily Dickinson's work as poetry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Jackson remarks upon the disjuncture between a heavily mediated social context of print poetry circulated in newspapers and magazines in the early nineteenth century and the contemporaneous, still powerful idea that the lyric is "ideally unmediated by those hands or those readers." Jackson consequently defines the lyric genre as poems removed from these "sociable circumstances."[17] Meredith McGill's scholarship also returns poems to their social contexts, which in the nineteenth century included the legally sanctioned practice of unauthorized reprinting within a circulation world that linked local to transatlantic realms. Until

[14] Ibid., 10.
[15] Max Cavitch, *American Elegy: The Poetry of Mourning from the Puritans to Whitman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 3.
[16] Ibid., 129.
[17] Virginia Jackson, *Dickinson's Misery: A Theory of Lyric Reading* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 6-7; 21.

recently, McGill argues, "Americanist critics have claimed national identity in poetry only in the protomodernist break with nineteenth-century poetic conventions," reducing nineteenth-century American poetry to the study of poets possessing "preternatural modernity."[18] This critical convention has impoverished the study of nineteenth-century American poetry. In the case of the ballad, for example, McGill considers visual and media history as well as print history to demonstrate the ballad's place within "an emergent, multimedia mass culture."[19]

Other scholars have contributed to this discussion by tracing American poetry's roots to eighteenth-century manuscript and performance cultures. David Shields explores eighteenth-century manuscript publication and circulation through the gift economy. In doing so, he illuminates belles lettres discourses, but also the clubs, coffeehouses, salons, and card tables from which the American Republic of letters emerged.[20] Leon Jackson extends this approach to studying authorship into antebellum America, examining its social "embeddedness" in distinct economies that transformed during the nineteenth century as exchanges between authors and readers became "less personal and less trusting, less flexible and less sustained."[21] Caroline Wigginton attends to early American women's publication, redefining publication as "relational," oriented toward intimate and local political and emotional contexts, not just the masculine "public sphere." Anchored by the epistolary form, but enfolding poetry among many

[18] Meredith L. McGill, "Introduction: The Traffic in Poems," in *The Traffic in Poems: Nineteenth-Century Poetry and Transatlantic Exchange*, ed. Meredith L. McGill (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 4; Meredith L. McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting, 1834-1853* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).
[19] Meredith McGill, "What Is a Ballad? Reading for Genre, Format, and Medium," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 71, no. 2 (2016): 157.
[20] David Shields, *Civil Tongues: Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).
[21] Leon Jackson, *The Business of Letters: Authorial Economies in Antebellum America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 2-3.

other genres, this model emphasizes "the dynamics of interpersonal exchange" that enabled American women writers to use various mediums to negotiate social relations.[22]

As this scholarship suggests, American literary critics have drawn upon Media Studies to reengage with the question of genre in American poetry. Lisa Gitelman defines genre as a "mode of recognition instantiated in discourse," rather than one traceable to linguistic-formal attributes. Thought about in this way, genres depend upon public recognition that is "collective, spontaneous, and dynamic," making genres "ongoing and changeable practices of expression and reception" rather than unchanging "artifacts."[23] Such a way of thinking about genre helps us think about the strategies of authors in the nineteenth century, who composed in many genres and mediums, their poems appearing less often in books, for example, than in magazines or newspapers, juxtaposed with other stories and news apart from the textual content of the poem itself.[24]

Understanding genres as ongoing, social practices of meaning-making contradicts the pervasive idea that genres progress or inevitably evolve into definitive new shapes over time. Writers innovate genres as they build upon older genres in a process Elisa New calls "regeneracy" rather than "originality."[25] Shifting understandings of modernity and temporality also fuel this scholarly reimagining of genre's forward bent. Lloyd Pratt explains that as genres form over centuries, "they cannibalize and adapt previous genres" and so "accrete a range of different and competing temporalities."[26] This new history of genre contests nineteenth-century

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[22] Caroline Wigginton, *In the Neighborhood: Women's Publication in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016), 5-6.
[23] Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 2.
[24] Cohen, *Social Lives of Poems*, 12-13.
[25] Elisa New, *The Regenerate Lyric: Theology and Innovation in American Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 7.
[26] Lloyd Pratt, *Archives of American Time: Literature and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2010), 8.

American literature's traditional alignment with "a virtual experience of time as linear progress" and shared sense of national belonging.[27] Rather than a nation-building tool, or an activity approaching a universal aesthetic, literature is "a form of constant borrowing that secretes the time consciousness of other places and other peoples in its very form." While progress requires an "absolute break with the encumbering past," literature necessarily builds from the past, scavenging past genres for present uses.[28]

Although the recent scholarly movement exploring poetry's social uses has revitalized interest in nineteenth-century American poetry, these scholars fail to ask what it means that these social uses of literature could be found in diverse, middle-class homes in Indian Territory, Canada, and the United States. If, as these scholars argue, the way to understand nineteenth-century poetry is through its social uses, that scholarship should include American Indian poetry in addition to African American poetry and poetry by American women writers. Moreover, Native Studies scholars have important perspectives on nineteenth-century American literary history and its interactions with indigenous peoples that have yet to be appreciated by American poetry scholars.

"Unreal and Ahistorical": Poetry and Indigenous Historicity

If genres are past-facing, why have critics tended to view nineteenth-century American literature as forward-facing? During the nineteenth century, American understandings of history also transformed. Contact with Native North Americans taxed the explanatory capacities of western and biblical texts, shifting American ideas of history towards secularism, so that many eighteenth-century Americans thought of history as shaped by repeated cycles of rising and

[27] Ibid., 4-5.
[28] Ibid., 53.

falling civilizations. Over the course of the nineteenth century, Americans dropped the "decline" stage of this cyclical narrative and embraced their history as linear progress instead.[29] American scholars, however, excluded Native Americans from this national narrative, because it was premised on a notion of a special destiny for a superior race: the "Anglo-Saxon." Americans assumed that American indigenous peoples would become extinct or perhaps individually assimilate into American society. Americans thus shifted the declining civilization narrative onto Native Americans, whose land they wanted for the unfolding narrative of linear progress imagined as Manifest Destiny. This historical narrative placed American Indians "outside of the progressive, chronologically marked time."[30] Just as settler Americans were locked in one form of time, progressive history, other races were locked in another, of inexorable collapse. The repercussions of this story were wide-reaching for American Indians, who could be recognized neither within the physical space nor the temporal sensibility of expanding settler nations.[31]

Native Studies scholars have been dismantling such historical claims about Native Americans for decades, and indigenous intellectuals for centuries. Vine Deloria. Jr. challenged the proliferation of false yet ubiquitous knowledge of Indians by figures like white anthropologists, missionaries, and government officials in his 1969 manifesto *Custer Died for Your Sins*. "To be an Indian in modern American society," he wrote, "is in a very real sense to be unreal and ahistorical." He argued in favor of a non-militant nationalism and tribalism for American Indians, hoping to inspire a new generation of Native activists and leaders.[32] Gerald Vizenor similarly praised the "postindian warriors" who create new tribal presences in stories for

[29] Steven Conn, *History's Shadow: Native Americans and Historical Consciousness in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 209-210.
[30] Ibid., 32.
[31] Ibid., 33.
[32] Vine Deloria Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 2.

"survivance" in *Manifest Manners* in 1994.[33] Vizenor created the neologism "manifest manners" as wordplay on Manifest Destiny to describe dominant American narratives about American Indians such as James Fenimore Cooper's novels, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha*, and Western movies.[34] In his 1998 *Fugitive Poses*, Vizenor added the concept of "transmotion," or non-linear movement across imagined boundaries, to build an indigenous sovereignty based on "personal, totemic, and reciprocal" rights of motion. This concept critiques Manifest Destiny's resolutely expansive motion and contests American historical and temporal ideas of national unity through progress.[35]

Recently, Native Studies scholars have asked how nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Native American-authored texts criticize American colonialism. Phillip Round's 2010 study of book history in Indian Country, *Removable Type*, contends that in Native American hands print was a weapon against relocation, allotment, and cultural erasure. Round argues that "*all* texts are produced in a composite way, and that *all* texts, Euro-American and Native American alike, are the products of complex networks of publishers, printers, editors, audiences, and authors." Within these networks, American Indians "self-consciously manipulated print and were integral members of the composite body that is American print culture."[36] As printers, ministers, newspaper editors, proprietary authors, and illustrators, Native Americans created books, or book-like objects, that complemented their oral and graphic traditions and contributed to their survivance. American Indian historians have contributed to these discussions with

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[33] Gerald Vizenor first uses the neologism "survivance" in *Manifest Manners* to describe what he calls the "literature of survivance," whose key is "trickster hermeneutics," trickster strategies that constantly breaks down through storying, cultural commonplaces, and pieties. Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1994).
[34] Ibid.
[35] Gerald Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 16.
[36] Phillip H. Round, *Removable Type: Histories of the Book in Indian Country, 1663-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 16, 18.

detailed tribal national histories that foreground the uninterrupted relevance of American Indian tribal nations. Kelli Jean Mosteller and John N. Low, for example, present different Potawatomi histories with their accounts of the Citizen Potawatomi experience of allotment in the nineteenth century and the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians' Chicago land claims.[37] Kiara M. Vigil's research on late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century American Indian intellectuals responds to Gerald Vizenor's question: "What did it mean to be the first generation to hear stories of the past, bear the horrors of the moment, and write to the future?" Virgil argues that these turn-of-the-century American Indian intellectuals "were able to strategically harness the expectations of largely non-Native audiences on behalf of themselves and Indian Country." At a time when U.S. and Canadian audiences viewed American Indians through "primitivist ideologies that aimed to define Indianness only in terms of the past," these Native intellectuals wanted to gain American citizenship to help their tribal nations and communities.[38]

Despite this recent work in Native Studies, American literary historians continue to view American Indian presence in nineteenth-century American literature largely through writers like Lydia Maria Child, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and James Fenimore Cooper.[39] Yet for more than a century before the arrival of Modernism, Native North American poets challenged nineteenth-century American conceptions of genre and time through their poetry, its performance, and its publication. Understanding these indigenous poetic interventions challenges the way that nineteenth-century American ideas about genre, time, and history continue to affect

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[37] Kelli Jean Mosteller, "Place, Politics, and Property: Negotiating Allotment for the Citizen Potawatomi, 1861-1891," (dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2013); John N. Low, *Imprints: The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and the City of Chicago* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2016).
[38] Kiara M. Vigil, *Indigenous Intellectuals: Sovereignty, Citizenship, and the American Imagination, 1880-1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 2, 3.
[39] See Joshua David Bellin, *The Demon of the Continent: Indians and the Shaping of American Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).

linear and progressive narratives of American poetry. This body of work, and the history of its makers and contexts, dismantles American poetry's linear and progressive narrative through attention to indigenous poets' complex choices to adapt western and indigenous genres to specific historical, political, and publishing worlds. These choices resonate with current historical poetics and genre theory as socially embedded literary practices and inspire critics to apply innovations in poetics and genre theory to rethink the developmentalist narrative of American literary history.

Recovery projects like this one have the potential not just to tell previously hidden stories about minority writers, trace influences on contemporary writers in the age of multicultural global literature, criticize the basis of the canon, or make us aware of the complicity of literary history with settler colonialism. By engaging the cosmologies of indigenous groups and their relations to indigenous genres, they can offer alternative ways of thinking about the relationship between form, history, and American poetry. Although digitization of archival materials has increased access to early Native North American literature, the definitions and historiography of American poetry continue to proceed without regard to indigenous *forms* of literary expression. Though it is outside the scope of this dissertation, Longfellow's career, for example, would look different situated in a narrative of American poetry's development that appreciates a navigation between not just the local and the international, but the presence of non-western, American genres (textual and otherwise), a methodological necessity for scholars examining indigenous writers. This lens would appreciate Longfellow's poems not as proto-modern exoticism but as extensions of the past inextricably tied to experimentations with genre.[40]

[40] Kirsten Silva Gruesz, *Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

Chapter Outline

This dissertation brings recent scholarship in genre studies, historical poetics, and Native Studies together to question American literary history's investment in a progressive, linear model of American poetry. By examining how Native North American poets have adapted various poetic genres, we can access a North American literary scene in which indigenous writers were key players. Studying these indigenous poets today not only revises scholarly ideas about American literary history's past and the role indigenous writers played in it, but also opens a path to a non-linear history of American poetry. Methodologically, each chapter examines how indigenous poets comment on the practice of poetry and poetry as a form, thereby speaking to a community that is difficult to describe in terms of tribal affiliation, race, religion, or nationality. Instead, these indigenous poets speak to a community of poets and readers of poetry as they self-consciously engage a wide variety of verse traditions. This method for reading early Native North American poetry sets aside complex questions of identity boundaries, categories, and definitions to focus on the decisions that these indigenous poets make and the reading communities from which they come.

In Chapter 1, "'Too violent an application': Genre, Gender, and Power in the Poetry of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft," I ask, if the story of poetic genres told by Cavitch and others holds true, how can it explain the literary efforts of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft? This chapter examines the multiple cultural inheritances of the mourning poem, ballad, and lyric, as well as the material and relational circumstances of poetic production in the Anishinaabe world of the Great Lakes, to reveal how Schoolcraft's manipulations of time and genre can help scholars rethink the progressive narrative of American poetic history.

While the Schoolcraft chapter builds from a rich archive, Chapter 2, "The Birchbark Print Archive: Simon Pokagon's Poetic Adaptations," grapples with the recurrent problem of archival absence or destruction in the study of Native North American literature. The circulatory archive of Pokagon's printed poetry presents methodological challenges, even as it shares Potawatomi history. From his birchbark pamphlet to his cross-racial citations and borrowings, Pokagon used insurgent practices of appropriation to criticize and revise colonialist American poetry.

Chapter 3, "From 'Verse-Wampum' to *Legends of Vancouver:* E. Pauline Johnson and the Changing Marketplace of American Indian Poetry" follows Mohawk and Anglo-Canadian author E. Pauline Johnson over the course of her literary career as a poet, performer, and author from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. During this time, public literary tastes in indigenous North American writing shifted, with the anthropological turn, from poems to legends and ethnographic stories. Johnson recognized these literary marketplace changes and switched from poetry to more lucrative genres like short stories to bolster her career and support herself as a single woman. Although Johnson's *Legends of Vancouver* marks this literary turn, Johnson continues to use poems as prefaces and explicitly links poetry with the legends in her metaphors. This chapter combines formalist reading practices, book history, and Johnson's family history to argue that the formal choices of indigenous poets like Johnson helped invent a different kind of modernist poetry. Johnson's "verse-wampum" ultimately challenged a modernist, nationalist poetry whose premise rested on indigenous peoples being trapped in pre-modernity.

While Chapter 3 links nineteenth century Native North American poetry to modernism, Chapter 4, "'Thy genius shaped a dream into a deed': The Poetry and Politics of Alex Posey," connects the work of turn-of-the-century Creek poet Posey to indigenous poetry throughout the

twentieth century. Posey wrote skeptical elegies, dialect poems, and political newspaper verse about allotment in Indian Territory that drew upon both western and Creek literary forms. After his early and sudden death, however, his wife Minnie made choices about his poetic legacy that, along with his politics, continue to affect Posey's literary reputation today. Yet the practice of these kinds of poetic appropriations by Jane Johnson Schoolcraft, Simon Pokagon, E. Pauline Johnson, and Alex Posey created and sustained a way of relating to genre that remains powerful for indigenous poets in North America today.

Chapter 1: "Too violent an application": Genre, Gender, and Power in the Poetry of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft

INTRODUCTION

Anishinaabe-Scotch-Irish writer Jane Johnston Schoolcraft was the eldest daughter of a prominent fur trading family in Sault Ste. Marie in the upper peninsula of present-day Michigan in 1800. Schoolcraft's mother, Ozhaguscodaywayquay or Green Prairie Woman, also known as Susan, spoke entirely in Anishinaabemowin, the Anishinaabe language, and her father, John Johnston, had emigrated from Ireland to become a fur trader.[41] Schoolcraft grew up listening to her mother's Anishinaabe stories and reading English and French books from her father's extensive personal library. In her poetry, Schoolcraft adapted different poetic genres and forms to speak about her relationships and the changing circumstances in Sault Ste. Marie.

Over the course of Schoolcraft's life, Sault Ste. Marie would transform from a fur trading town into a site of strategic national boundary establishment, as the United States consolidated power in the Great Lakes area after the War of 1812. At the beginning of Schoolcraft's life, Sault Ste. Marie was within what historian Richard White has termed the "middle ground," a place or zone of unusual cooperation between settler-colonial and indigenous people.[42] In 1822, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft arrived at Sault Ste. Marie as the first United States federal Indian agent for Michigan Territory and boarded with the influential Johnston family. He and Jane decided to marry the next year. Schoolcraft and the Johnston family aided Henry in his career by acting as interpreters, collaborators, and editors for his many projects, the most famous of which was the

[41] Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky*, ed. Robert Dale Parker (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 7.
[42] Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

1839 book of Anishinaabe legends, *Algic Researches*, one of the inspirations for Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's popular epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha*.[43]

Henry collected and distributed Anishinaabe oral literature in the form of the Johnston family's stories and songs as part of the United States government's national civilizing project, beginning to take shape in the early nineteenth century. In preparing these stories for publication, he made editorial decisions about genre—divorcing songs from their narrative contexts, for instance, and placing them in an appendix.[44] Robert Gunn's *Ethnology and Empire* describes these practices as part of a larger American colonial project wherein amateur ethnographers, linguists, and government officials collaborated in attempts to document and control American Indian tribal nations.

Henry's preconceptions about literary genres affected not only his editorial work on Anishinaabe culture, but also the linguistic questionnaires he composed and distributed about indigenous languages on the behalf of the United States government. Such questionnaires often followed the model of Thomas Jefferson's famous "skeleton" questionnaire of 282 radical words, "upon which the words—variable, impermanent, and imprecise—could be made flesh."[45] Questionnaires often pre-frame questions, delimiting the terms of response. For instance, of Indian songs, Henry asked his collaborators, "Is there any rhyme in them? Are the words collocated so as to observe the laws of quantity? In other words, are they measured, or are the accents in them found to recur in fixed and regular intervals?"[46] American Indian literary genres

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[43] Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *The Literary Voyager or Muzzeniegun*, ed. Philip P. Mason (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974), xxiv-xxiii.
[44] William M. Clements, "Schoolcraft as Textmaker," *The Journal of American Folklore* 103, no. 408 (1990): 181, 183.
[45] Robert Gunn, *Ethnology and Empire: Languages, Literature, and the Making of the North American Borderlands* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 32.
[46] Clements, "Schoolcraft as Textmaker," 184.

are presupposed by such lists, which measure cultural productions by the yardstick of English poetical forms.

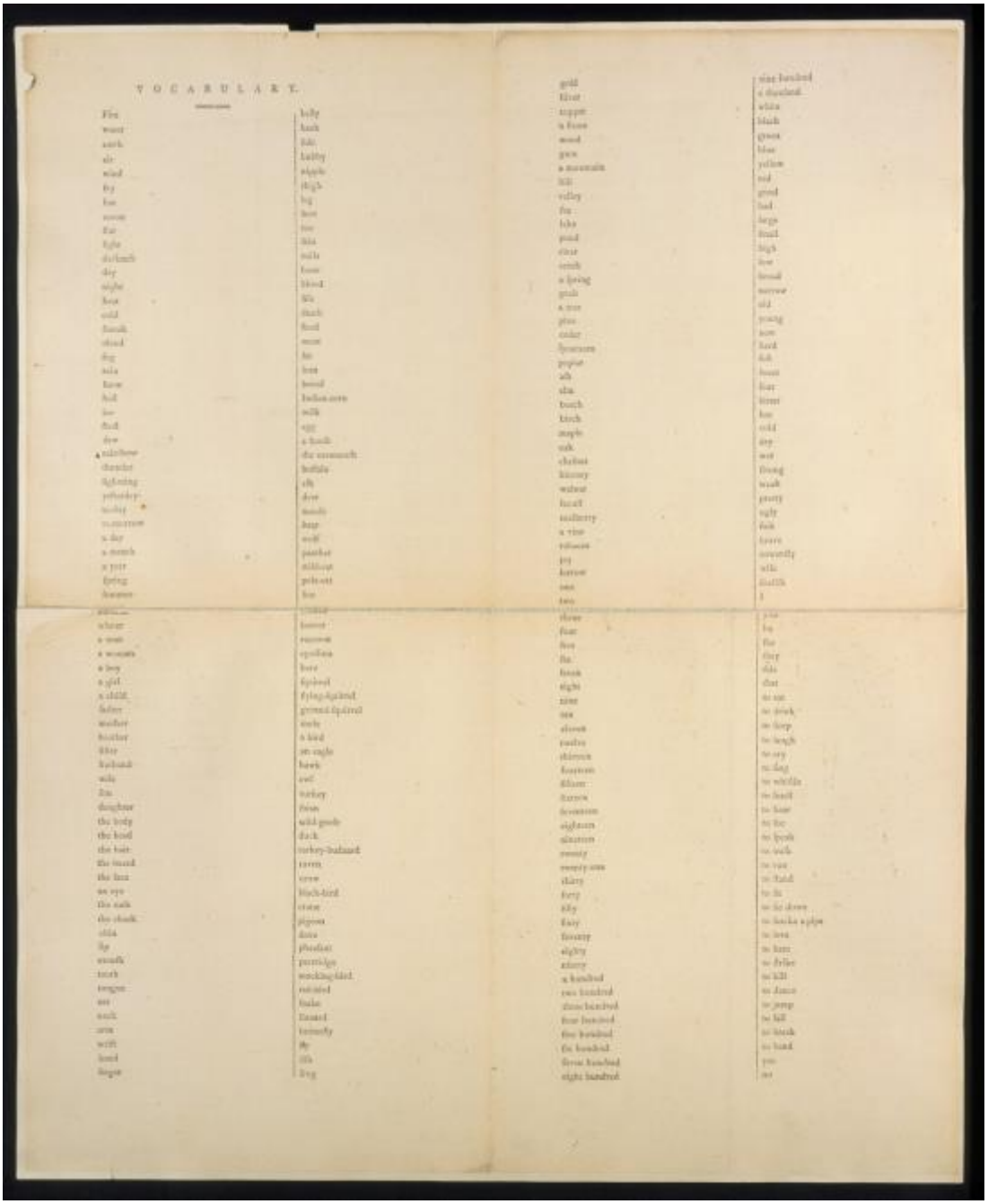

Figure 1: Blank Jefferson vocabulary form, referred to as a "skeleton," ca. 1790-92, American Indian Vocabulary Collection, American Philosophical Society Digital Library, http://amphilsoc.org/mole/view?docId=ead/Mss.497.V85-ead.xml

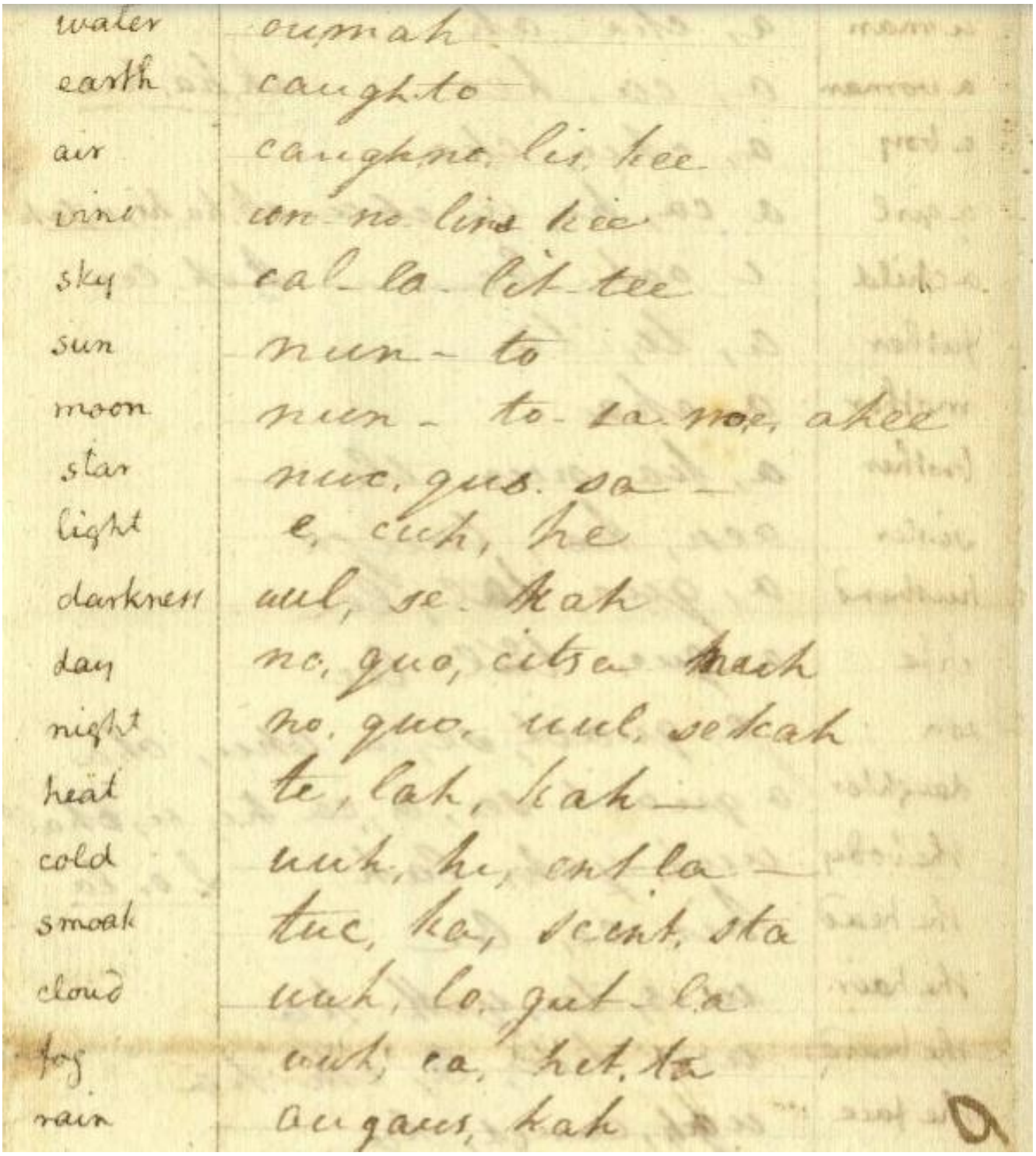

Figure 2: An example of a completed "skeleton" form, a vocabulary of the Cherokee language by David Campbell, received in 1800. American Indian Vocabulary Collection, American Philosophical Society Digital Library, http://amphilsoc.org/mole/view?docId=ead/Mss.497.V85-ead.xml

Linguistically, Gunn remarks, the collection of Native North American languages also relied on certain colonial epistemological and representational assumptions. These linguistic assumptions mirror some of the literary assumptions Henry Schoolcraft made in his editorial work on Anishinaabe culture. Gunn notes that ethnographers and missionaries who documented indigenous languages saw American Indian words as unitary artifacts or specimens, interchangeable with European languages in content and structure, with successful representation of phonemes ensuring communication.[47] Similarly, Henry looks for English literary features and genres in Anishinaabe texts, altering them when necessary, as did balladists like Thomas Percy.[48] These efforts are associated with salvage ethnography, a dominant paradigm in the human sciences from the nineteenth to twentieth century. The idea was that many of the world's peoples were on the verge of extinction, so artists and scientists had a moral duty to document them and to preserve their knowledge before they disappeared. Implicit in salvage ethnography was the belief that certain groups of people were unable to progress beyond the so-called primitive social state.[49] The cultural relativism promoted by the influential anthropologist Franz Boas and his students destroyed the evolutionist narrative behind salvage ethnography and professionalized anthropology's methods in the twentieth century.[50] But even as the methods of ethnologists and emerging anthropologists changed in the twentieth century, justifications for the emerging disciplines remained centered on recording and preserving what anthropologists saw as primitive cultures.[51]

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[47] Gunn, *Ethnology and Empire*, 2.
[48] Clements, "Schoolcraft as Textmaker," 190.
[49] Brian Hochman, *Savage Preservation: The Ethnographic Origins of Modern Media Technology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), xiii.
[50] Ibid., 27.
[51] Ibid., xv.

A missing element of this story, however, is the role of nineteenth-century poetic genres, theories, and aesthetics in shaping these editorial practices. The intersection of anthropological and poetical genres shaped and was shaped by the reception of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's poetry. With Schoolcraft's help, Henry recast American Indian songs and speeches as "poetry," hesitantly adding, "if it be not too violent an application of the term."[52] Poetry signaled to Henry, as it did to most nineteenth-century Americans, the highest echelons of cultural production, that, since German Romanticism, had been increasingly tied to a nation's character. In American literature, these literary-cultural anxieties emerge in the early national period and resonate through the writings of authors like Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Walt Whitman, and Herman Melville into the present day.

Collectors like Henry Schoolcraft were predisposed to find certain generic forms in American Indian literature in part because common evolutionary stereotypes regarded indigenous peoples as "premodern"—and, for some observers, stuck there. In an essay called "Poetic Development of the Indian Mind," part of a report on American Indian tribal nations, Henry supports this popular view of indigenous peoples as premodern, writing: "Wherever Indian sentiment is expressed there is a tendency to the pensive—the reminiscent. It may be questioned whether hope is an ingredient of the Indian mind; all the tendency of reflection is directed towards the past…. To lament, and not to hope, is its characteristic feature."[53] Henry goes on to explain the effects of this supposedly indigenous character trait on formal features of American Indian poetry:

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[52] Clements, "Schoolcraft as Textmaker," 184.

[53] Henry R. Schoolcraft, "Poetic Development of the Indian Mind," in *Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States: Collected and Prepared under the direction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs per act of Congress of March 3rd, 1847, Part III* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Co., 1853), 327.

> Most of the attempts to record poetic sentiments in the race have encountered difficulties, from the employment of some forms of the Grecian metres; or, still less adapted to it, English laws of rhyme. They have neither. It is far better suited, as the expression of strong poetic feeling, to the freedom of the Hebrew measure; the repetitious style of which reminds one of both the Indian sepulchral or burial chant, and eulogy. There is indeed in the flow of their oratory, as well as song, a strong tendency to the figure of parallelism.[54]

To make this statement, Henry had to ignore his own wife's poetry, or at least exclude it from the category of American Indian poetry. For Jane Johnston Schoolcraft not only deploys "English laws of rhyme," but manipulates poetic forms ranging from elegies and sentimental, lyrical, and religious poetry to the sonnet.

What Henry calls the "too violent…application" of poetic and linguistic principles to American Indian writing may also account for why the poetry of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft is just beginning to be appreciated in Native American literature. Scholars today are more inclined to dismiss Schoolcraft's verse as too Anglicized—and thus to commit the same violent application of genre to Schoolcraft's poetry. Reading her poetry today requires thinking about Schoolcraft's complex uses of poetic forms, which adapt English and Scottish poetic genres to Anishinaabe storytelling practices, concepts, and worldviews.

Schoolcraft brings both Anishinaabe and Scottish poetic traditions to her poetry composition. In an Anishinaabe context, stories are divided into two categories: *dibaajimowinan* and *aadizokaanag*. *Dibaajimowinan* involve collecting and redistributing truth and use a simple, direct style of narration, while *aadizokaanag* stories, sometimes called myths, communicate life's complexity through a cast of characters familiar to the Anishinaabeg.[55] An Anishinaabe cultural tenet is to be "looking in all directions and making change possible."[56]

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[54] Ibid.," 328.
[55] Margaret Noodin, *Bawaajimo: A Dialect of Dreams in Anishinaabe Language and Literature* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2014), 20-21.
[56] Ibid., 9.

Anishinaabemowin emphasizes flexibility and change, and Anishinaabe literature shares this fascination by constructing variations on familiar themes.[57] Anishinaabe stories focus on action and survival, through passed-down knowledge of directions, animals, and plants, in an environment that features drastically changing seasons.[58] From her Scotch-Irish father, Schoolcraft inherited a love for English and Scottish books and ballads, which lent emigrants a sense of cultural identity and kinship as they moved across oceans and continents and adapted to new environments. Schoolcraft melded these literary traditions, using her poetry to effect emotional and material change in herself, Henry, and their group of correspondents. Her poetry made sense of her situation as an Anishinaabe-Scotch-Irish woman in Michigan Territory. It did so in part by steering her husband and other correspondents towards a reclamation of the middle ground of love that had been badly damaged by increased American settlement and control of the Great Lakes.

Schoolcraft's experimentation with the ballad, lyric, elegy, and sonnet challenges the nineteenth-century restriction of American Indian formal choices by ethnologists like her husband Henry to traditional oral genres like songs or legends. In her poetry Schoolcraft made formal decisions that defied generic categorization by imbuing English or Scottish poetic forms with Anishinaabe meaning. Reframing Schoolcraft's poetry within its historical, tribal, and religious contexts reveals the innovations Schoolcraft made to poetic genre. By extension, her poetry suggests implications not only for American Indian literature, but for retelling the history of American poetry. Turning to the relations of literary exchange, editing, and invention that characterize Schoolcraft's family relations gives a more nuanced, if conflicted, view of Native agency. On a larger scale, a historical and formal study of Schoolcraft's poetry suggests ways in

[57] Ibid., 21.
[58] Ibid., 37-38.

which early American Indian poets' manipulations of time and genre might help us rethink the progressive narrative of American literary history and American poetry.

A Miscodeed Methodology: Reading Schoolcraft's Poetry through Anishinaabe Stories

Pairing one of Schoolcraft's sentimental poems "To the Miscodeed" with her legend "Origin of the Miscodeed or the Maid of Taquimenon" reveals how Schoolcraft's poetry manipulates popular poetic genres of her time in an Anishinaabe cultural context. Schoolcraft brought a distinctively Anishinaabe as well as Scottish knowledge of poetry to her writing practices. Through her story of the miscodeed and its illumination of her poem about the miscodeed, Schoolcraft melds Anishinaabe and Christian stories, opening her poetry to multiple interpretations.

At first blush, "To the Miscodeed" describes the blossoming of one of the first spring wildflowers, which the Anishinaabeg call the miscodeed (*Claytonia Virginica*). A harbinger of spring, the flower mostly appears white with pink veins, although sometimes all pink. Schoolcraft begins the poem, "Sweet pink of northern wood and glen, / E'er first to greet the eyes of men / In early spring,—a tender flower / Whilst still the wintry wind hath power."[59] With these lines, Schoolcraft sets the scene of her poem in the northern woods of Michigan Territory on the cusp of spring. She continues, "How welcome, in the sunny glade, / Or hazel copse, thy pretty head / Oft peeping out, whilst still the snow, / Doth here and there, its presence show." The miscodeed's appearance foretells winter's end with a sweet defiance that alludes to the power of women in Anishinaabe society.

[59] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 91.

While "To the Miscodeed" first reads as a conventional poem about a woman's coming of age, the importance of first menstruation to Anishinaabe women presents alternative readings. Anishinaabe women occupy an important place in their tribal social worlds. Women are seen as innately strong, and ceremonies mark a girl's first menstruation and reinforce her connections to her family, community, and clan.[60] Jane Johnston Schoolcraft was aware of these ceremonies, having translated the stories of Catherine Waboose, who spoke of her first menstruation.[61] In the last few lines of the poem, the miscodeed's resemblance to a young woman becomes abundantly clear: "Soon leaf and bud quick opening spread / Thy modest petals—white with red / Like some sweet cherub—love's kind link, / With dress of white, adorned with pink."

Anishinaabe readings of the poem become even stronger upon reading Schoolcraft's legend, "Origin of the Miscodeed or the Maid of Taquimenon," found in Henry's papers and his book *Algic Researches*. The legend tells the story of Mongazida's fourteen-year-old daughter, who was "the pride of her parents, and their only child." She loved to play among the wild flowers in the valley of Taquimenon, near Whitefish Bay in Lake Superior on the eastern end of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. It was in this valley that the young woman "prepared her bower of branches, and fasted to obtain a guardian spirit, to conduct her through life, according to the belief and customs of her people." Schoolcraft describes a version of an Anishinaabe ceremony that commonly took place at first menstruation, when young women fasted in seclusion. This was "a special time in a young woman's life that affirmed connections to her family, community, and *doodem*, or clan."[62] Schoolcraft likely learned of these traditions from her mother as well as well as from Waboose. This reading of the story as a menstruation

[60] Brenda Child, *Holding Our World Together: Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community* (New York: Viking, 2012), 5.
[61] Ibid., 6-7.
[62] Ibid., 5.

ceremony is supported by the detail Schoolcraft gives that this story took place "early in the Strawberry Moon."[63] Besides mirroring the image of the pink-laced miscodeed, strawberries often played an important role in a young woman's first menstruation year, a special phase of her life. During this time, the young woman endured some social prohibitions, followed by a short fast, and a "ritual eating of strawberries."[64] Schoolcraft's Strawberry Moon reflects the importance of that fruit to this Anishinaabe ceremony.

The young woman fasting in the woods in Schoolcraft's story also resembles the Anishinaabe vision quests that many male adolescents undertook to petition for the guardianship of a manitou, a relationship that made them a complete Anishinaabe person.[65] Theresa Smith describes an Anishinaabe world full of other-than-human people called "manitous," composed of the Thunderbirds and the Underwater manitous.[66] The manitou would become the advisor and protector of an Anishinaabe person for life, and the person would offer the manitou respect, loyalty, and gifts.[67] During the young woman's vision quest, she "first beheld that little angel, who in the shape of a small white bird, of purest plumage, assumed to be her guardian spirit, in cot and wood, through sun and storm, for the remainder of her days."[68] Schoolcraft notes, "Happy were her slumbers in this delightful visitation, and happy her awakening, as she hasted back, with fawn-like fleetness, to her parents' lodge, with one more charm—one more pleasing recollection—one more tie to bind her fancy and her heart to the sweet valley of the Taquiemenon."[69] The characterization of the young woman's relationship with her guardian or

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[63] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 181.
[64] Child, *Holding Our World Together*, 7.
[65] Theresa S. Smith, *The Island of the Anishinaabeg: Thunderers and Water Monsters in the Traditional Ojibwe Life World* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 55-56.
[66] Ibid., 2.
[67] Ibid., 56.
[68] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 181.
[69] Ibid.

angel as a "charm," "recollection," or "tie," conveys the importance of this visitation for the young woman, who has acquired a new helper for life, and for her community, which has gained a mature adult. In Schoolcraft's narrative, the white bird melds images of the Holy Spirit in the form of "little angel" and "guardian spirit" with traditional Anishinaabe belief in manitous. Christian Anishinaabeg like Schoolcraft often combined religious images from Anishinaabe and Christian traditions to form new ones. In this case, since both the Thunderers and the Holy Spirit fly between the sky and earth, Christian Anishinaabeg merged these two figures into birds.[70]

Schoolcraft does not name the young woman in the story until after this spiritual visitation, suggesting that her name was also acquired during this dream. Birth names are often bestowed upon Anishinaabe children by relatives or tribal elders who dreamed the name. Names received during vision quests are also seen as divinely bestowed and usually kept secret, as they identify a person's essence.[71] When enemies attack and kill her parents, the young woman, now named Miscodeed, turns to her guardian, crying, "'Oh, bird of my dreams…my beautiful white wing!—my angel of promise! save me from the hands of my cruel enemies.'" After crying out, Miscodeed sinks to the ground, and when the enemies enter the lodge, her body is gone. In place of the young woman, "A small and beautiful white bird, was seen to fly from the top of the lodge. It was the guardian spirit of Miscodeed. The knife and tomahawk were cheated of their prey—her guardian angel had saved her from being the slave of her enemy." Yet, one remnant of Miscodeed does remain, unnoticed by her enemies. On the ground where Miscodeed fell, her family's friends discover "a modest little white flower, bordered with pink border which was at once destined to be her emblem."[72] Schoolcraft thus constructs a double ending where

[70] Smith, *Island of the Anishinaabeg*, 139-140.
[71] Ibid., 67.
[72] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 183.

Miscodeed is both the "modest little white flower," overlooked by her enemies and foretelling spring, and her guardian bird, a Holy Spirit-like dove exiting the body. Again, Schoolcraft combines Christian images of souls flying like doves to heaven with Anishinaabe stories of people marrying or metamorphosing into Thunderbirds to flee danger.[73]

Another generic context for Schoolcraft's miscodeed poem is the long English tradition of poems about flowers as women. Although Schoolcraft alludes to this poetic tradition, "To the Miscodeed" breaks with the usual form of these poems. The poem celebrates the beauty of women, alluding to menstruation without voyeurism and highlighting Anishinaabe women's power in society as creators of life. Gender roles in Anishinaabe society are mutually supportive, and men do not have the right to direct a woman's life after marriage; women maintain a separate clan identity from their husbands.[74] Women's ability to give life is valued in Anishinaabe communities, and their participation is vital to the "material and spiritual well-being of their community."[75] Although these traditions began to change with the establishment of reservations and private property ownership through the Dawes Act, Anishinaabe women maintain an important spiritual and economic place within their tribal nations.[76] As the miscodeed signals spring by braving the cold and giving hope to people used to enduring the long Michigan winters, Schoolcraft's writing gives hope of a place for indigenous women writers with complex political and religious alliances in the canon of Native American literature.

[73] Smith, *Island of the Anishinaabeg*, 2.
[74] Child, *Holding Our World Together*, 46.
[75] Ibid., 5.
[76] Ibid., 15.

READING AND WRITING PRACTICES AT SAULT STE. MARIE

Sault Ste. Marie in the upper peninsula of present-day Michigan had long been an Anishinaabe gathering place during autumn and wartime, its larger villages leading to intermarriage and widespread clan families.[77] By 1750, Sault Ste. Marie had become an important trade depot and outlet for the Lake Superior fur trade, first composed of French and then British settlers.[78] Successful traders like Schoolcraft's father learned to speak Anishinaabemowin and married into Anishinaabe families.[79] The political climate of the Great Lakes at this time depended upon a reliable system of alliances and friendships between indigenous and European people that facilitated trading.[80] Marriage alliances between Anishinaabeg and Europeans, like that of Schoolcraft's parents, were mutually beneficial in the Great Lakes region, with the Anishinaabe clan system facilitating "reciprocal relations of protection, goodwill, and generosity."[81]

Several of Schoolcraft's poems illuminate the changing political climate of the Great Lakes over the course of her lifetime. "To the Pine Tree," a poem Schoolcraft originally wrote in Anishinaabemowin, depicts the Great Lakes middle ground in the early nineteenth century, before American domination. As Schoolcraft returns home from a trip to Ireland with her father, they cross the Niagara ridge on the route from Queenston to Fort Erie. Schoolcraft bursts out, "The pine! the pine! I eager cried, / The pine, my father! see it stand, / As first that cherished tree I spied, / Returning to my native land."[82] As the appearance of the miscodeed signals the

[77] Ibid., 29; William W. Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, ed. Theresa Schenck (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2009), 12.
[78] Ibid., 85.
[79] Child, *Holding Our World Together*, 31.
[80] Warren, *History of Ojibway People*, 19.
[81] Child, *Holding Our World Together*, 32, 62.
[82] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 89-90.

temporal and seasonal change that is spring, the pine signals a geographic change and homecoming to the Anishinaabe territory of the middle ground for Schoolcraft.

The middle ground, however, had shifted by the time Schoolcraft was in her twenties and met Henry. Overhunting, preference for silk over fur, and the use of alcohol as payment indebted the Anishinaabeg to traders, who demanded United States intervention through the sale of Indian land.[83] As the foundations of the middle ground economy crumbled, the United States established colonial authority in the Great Lakes region. Although technically established in 1805, Michigan Territory became a reality after the War of 1812 and the dissolution of the Northwest Company in 1819, as Americans like Henry began to move into the Great Lakes region.[84] Determined to hold onto power in the area, the American Congress passed the Indian Trade and Intercourse Act in 1816, which mandated that only American citizens be granted licenses to trade with indigenous peoples in the United States.[85]

Schoolcraft alludes to this time of American imperialism in her poem, "Pensive Hours," which displays many of the characteristics of a minor subgenre of romantic lyrics, the historical catalog poem.[86] Historical catalog poems are a type of lyric poem dedicated to "historical meditation" set in motion through natural phenomenon such as the moon, sun, or sea, rather than a ruin or monument. Ted Underwood explains, "If the ruin poem contained an implicit boast about travel, the catalog poem implicitly boasts a historicist consciousness that has learned to see the past as present in the most unlikely place…history alters and inflects even the eternal forms

[83] Child, *Holding Our World Together*, 49; Charles E. Cleland, *The Place of the Pike (Gnoozhekaaning): A History of the Bay Mills Indian Community* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 20-21.
[84] Ibid., 17.
[85] Child, *Holding Our World Together*, 37.
[86] Ted Underwood, *Why Literary Periods Mattered: Historical Contrast and the Prestige of English Studies* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2013), 64-70.

of nature."[87] The historical catalog poem allowed middle-class writers to transform their "lack of worldly experience into a positive advantage, since the fact that the speaker's historical knowledge consists only of dim imitations can be made to dramatize the very quality of indeterminacy that makes culture superior to titles, property, and worldly fame."[88]

Like these historical catalog poems, Schoolcraft's "Pensive Hours" begins with a contemplation of the sunset: "The sun had sunk like a glowing ball, / As lonely I sat in my father's hall; / I walk'd to the window, and musing awhile, / The still, pensive moments I sought to beguile." As in the historical catalog poems, the sunset provokes the speaker's historical meditation. Schoolcraft notes other natural elements in relation to the sun as day turns into night—"the dark deep stream, / And bright silver rays on its breast did beam;— / And as with mild luster the vestal orb rose, / All nature betokened a holy repose." Just as the sounds of the historic past break the silence in the historical catalog poems, "the Sound of St. Mary's—that softly and clear / Still fell in sweet murmurs upon my pleas'd ear / Like the murmur of voices we know to be kind, / Or war's silken banners unfurled to the wind, / Now rising, like shouts of the proud daring foe, / Now falling, like whispers congenial and low." A sound in the present—St. Mary's River at Sault Ste. Marie—recalls sounds from the Sault's historic past of war and peacetime. Schoolcraft's poem depicts the present moment as poised between war and peace, as was the case before the War of 1812 and as must have seemed the case again as the American government attempted to assert its control over the Great Lakes after the War of 1812.

Schoolcraft writes, "Amidst such a scene, thoughts arose in my mind; / Of my father, far distant—of life, and mankind." "Pensive Hours" thus turns to the historical catalog poem's speculations about immortality. Instead of seeing ghosts, however, which was common in

[87] Ibid., 64.
[88] Ibid., 70.

historical catalog poems, Schoolcraft resolutely turns her lyric toward Christianity instead. She continues:

> But slowly, receding—with awe most profound
> They rested on God, and his works spread around,
> Divine meditation!—and tear drops like dew—
> Now moisten'd my hand,—for His mercy I knew:
> Since even a leaf cannot wither and die,
> Unknown to his care, or unseen by his eye;
> Oh how much more then, will he hear when we mourn,
> And heal the pierced heart that by anguish is torn,
> When he sees that the soul to His will loves to bend,
> And patiently suffers and waits to the end.

Schoolcraft interrupts the form of the historical catalog poem with a turn to Christianity to console her worries for her father's safety. An Aeolian harp, however, blown by the "soft balmy night breeze" interrupts her peace, and Schoolcraft thinks, "I fanceyed [sic] some spirit was touching the strings, / And answered, or seemed to my hopes, thus to say, / Let thy Soul live in hope, mortal:—watch still and pray." The ghost of the historical catalog poem, which represents the speaker's consciousness of historical difference through an ability to hear or see ghosts, thus appears in Schoolcraft's poem as a God-sent spirit. Schoolcraft ends the poem "At peace with myself, with my God, and mankind." The Aeolian harp as spirit brings assurance "that my prayers were heard and approv'd, / For the speedy return of my father beloved; / For the health I so priz'd, but so seldom enjoyed. / That the time yet in store—should be wisely employed. / And my mind ever feel, as I felt at that time, / So pensively joyful, so humbly sublime.—"[89] At the poem's beginning, Schoolcraft fears the historical shift to American imperialism signaled by the sounds of war and peace at Sault Ste. Marie. By the end of the poem, however, the sounds of the Aeolian harp reassure Schoolcraft that God has heard her prayers and her family will survive this power change as they have survived in the past.

[89] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 109-112.

The Johnston family did remain influential in the Sault Ste. Marie area despite financial setbacks from the War of 1812. Susan and her son George used their family renown to stave off a potentially disastrous military confrontation between the Americans and the Anishinaabeg and negotiate the Treaty of Sault Ste. Marie in 1820. In this treaty, the Sault Anishinaabeg ceded sixteen square miles of land on the bank of the St. Mary's River so that the United States could establish a fort, and in exchange, received goods and secured a perpetual right to fish and camp at the falls of St. Mary's or Sault Ste. Marie.[90] With the Americans' arrival and establishment of a fort, the village of Sault Ste. Marie was partitioned between the United States and British North America, although the seasons rather than political power enforced the division in practice until the 1870s.[91] As the newly appointed Indian Agent for the Upper Great Lakes at Sault Ste. Marie, Henry enforced trade restrictions on foreign citizens like his own father-in-law, discouraged

[90] Cleland, *Place of the Pike*, 19. Historians note that this treaty, like many others, was coerced by American officials who threatened to take land by force that American Indians refused to sell them. In this case, Lewis Cass began the treaty negotiations by asserting that the Sault land in question already belonged to the United States since they had defeated the French and gained the land through the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, which transferred all French and British land claims to the United States. Cass's arrogant position angered the Anishinaabeg, who claimed no knowledge of the details of the Greenville treaty. Cass countered that the United States would be willing to "repurchase" four square miles of land adjacent to the river, and when the Anishinaabeg were unwilling to sell the land, Cass threatened to occupy the riverbank. This made the war chief Sassaba angry, and he stormed out of negotiations. As the Americans left, they saw that the British Union Jack was flying in the village. Cass took down the flag and told the Anishinaabeg that he was prepared to "'set a strong foot upon their necks and crush them to earth.'" These words and actions caused panic in both the American and Anishinaabeg camps. Anishinaabe women and children fled to safety across the river in canoes. Schoolcraft's mother Susan Johnston, however, took matters into her own hands. She told her son George to bring the chiefs to their house to discuss the situation. She convinced them that military opposition to the Americans was futile, and the chiefs agreed to deescalate the conflict and sign the treaty. Ibid., 18-19.

[91] Karl S. Hele, "The Anishinaabeg and Metis in the Sault Ste. Marie Borderlands: Confronting a Line Drawn upon the Water," in *Lines Drawn Upon the Water: First Nations and the Great Lakes Borders and Borderlands*, ed. Karl S. Hele (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008), 67. Both Anishinaabeg and settlers initially ignored the international border dividing the Sault between the United States and British North America. They regularly crossed the river in pursuit of game, fish or trade goods—during the summer by canoe or boat and in winter by snowshoes or sled, with the river only becoming difficult to cross in the spring and fall. Traditionally, the Anishinaabeg seasonally crossed the river for hunting, fishing, maple sugaring, and gathering activities. Both the United States and British North America sought to restrict these movements through treaties and gift practices that classified indigenous peoples as eligible or ineligible to receive gifts based on where they lived, when their residential status was actually fluid across the border. Nevertheless, accepting a treaty payment could lead to a denial of status or residence in one country or another, restricting longtime residency patterns across the Great Lakes borderlands. Although indigenous travel was restricted legally, citizens and soldiers on both sides of the Sault hosted events for public amusement, from parties to dances and card games, most of which involved heavy drinking and border crossing.

American Indians from crossing into Canada for trade, and informed the War Department of Anishinaabeg movements, with the ultimate goal of peaceful land cessions to the United States.[92]

At Sault Ste. Marie, reading was a temporally-bound practice for the Johnstons for both practical and religious reasons. The Johnstons possessed a large library, which one traveler described as containing "a thousand well-bound and well-selected volumes, French and English, evidently much in use, in winter especially." Henry describes the library as "a small, but select library of history, divinity, and classics, which furnishing a pleasing resource during the many years of solitude, and particularly, the long winter evenings."[93] Among Johnston's mostly British collection were a few American books, notably the work of Washington Irving and the novels of James Fenimore Cooper. Jane's favorite book was reportedly Jonathan Edwards' *Life of David Brainerd*, the biography of an eighteenth-century missionary to Native Americans.[94]

In Schoolcraft's family, reading became a seasonal activity at the nexus of the availability of books and time and a ritualistic or seasonal way of seeing the world. Viewing reading as a winter pastime emerges not only from the seasonal patterns of rural life but also from Anishinaabe storytelling customs. In addition to the genres of *dibaajimowinan* and *aadizokaanag*, Anishinaabeg categorize stories in in other ways including *tipacimowinak* or stories and *kanatipacimowinak* or sacred stories. Sacred stories are reserved for winter when the water is frozen because they often involve the water monster or Mishebeshu. Since speaking a person's name is as good as conjuring him or her in Anishinaabe thought, if a Mishebeshu story were told when the lakes were unfrozen, the water monster might visit the storyteller.[95]

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[92] Schoolcraft, *The Literary Voyager*, xix; Hele, "Anishinaabeg and Metis in the Sault," 74.
[93] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 13, 14.
[94] Maureen Konkle, "Recovering Jane Schoolcraft's Cultural Activism in the Nineteenth Century," in *The Oxford Handbook of Indigenous American Literature*, ed. James H. Cox and Daniel Heath Justice (New York: Oxford UP, 2014), 86.
[95] Smith, *Island of the Anishinaabeg*, 52.

Reading was also a social activity in early nineteenth-century America.[96] John Johnston often gathered the family around the table to listen to readings by himself or one of his sons as his daughters performed domestic work like sewing. When he read "good lines" in the newspapers or magazines, Johnston would call attention to them and read them aloud.[97] He tutored his children in literature, history, and the classics, drawing upon his large library for their studies. As in his fur trading days, Johnston also wrote poetry, often exchanging poems with Jane for amusement. Henry attributes much of his wife's "purity of language, correct pronunciation, and propriety of taste and manners, which distinguished her," to her father. "Under his direction she perused some of the best historians, the lives of Plutrarch [sic] the spectator and British essayists generally with the best dramatists and poets," Henry noted, such that she "not only acquired more than the ordinary proficiency in some of the branches of an English education but also a correct judgment and taste in literary *merit.*"[98] As landed, albeit penniless, gentry in Ireland, Johnston taught his children how to belong to the upper class through an appreciation of literature, which was thought to cultivate a certain "propriety of taste and manners" uncommon for Sault Ste. Marie. As Henry's observations show, Schoolcraft's literary as well as class upbringing made her a desirable match for a poorly educated Indian agent seeking to climb higher in the federal bureaucracy.

Notebooks from Schoolcraft's siblings corroborate Henry's claim that Schoolcraft, though homeschooled, was educated in the Roman classics, the Renaissance, and contemporary British literature, especially poetry.[99] Susan Johnston also taught her children about Anishinaabe

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[96] David Shields, *Civil Tongues: Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 323; Mary Kelley, *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).
[97] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 13.
[98] Ibid., 14.
[99] Ibid., 13.

customs and beliefs, including tribal traditions and legends, especially those of their grandfather, Waub Ojeeg, and his father, Ma Mongazida. All the Johnston children spoke Anishinaabemowin fluently, Eliza speaking the language exclusively, like her mother.[100]

The Johnston family greatly contributed to Henry's literary and professional work. Henry acknowledges this debt in his private journal of July 28, 1822, writing, "I have in fact stumbled, as it were, on the only family in Northwest America who could in Indian lore have acted as my guide, philosopher, and friend."[101] Schoolcraft's mother Susan Johnston was perhaps Henry's most valuable informant, as her Anishinaabe family ties brought relatives and friends to visit. Susan also told Henry Anishinaabe history, customs, beliefs, and stories using her children as interpreters.[102] Schoolcraft often acted as interpreter and editor for her husband's translations of Anishinaabemowin, while her brother George collaborated with Henry on many stories and would attain positions in the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs as government interpreter and subagent.[103]

In a letter to George written after Schoolcraft's death, dated August 31, 1844, Henry requests that George continue to collect "traditions & traits of the Red Race, and their character

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[100] Schoolcraft, *The Literary Voyager*, xxiii.

[101] Ibid., xxv.

[102] Ibid., xxiv-xxv. In the early nineteenth century, United States policymakers began using the work of ethnologists and linguistics like Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and others to categorize and manage American Indian tribal nations. Robert Gunn's book *Ethnology and Empire: Languages, Literature, and the Making of the North American Borderlands* explores how the arguments of eighteenth and nineteenth-century philologists and linguists relate to the ideas about culture and advanced civilization versus primitivism driving United States Indian policies at the time. Gunn uncovers that assumptions about indigenous languages, their collection as physical artifacts, and Native communication networks shaped United States expansionist activity and federal policy in the western borderlands. Collaboration between amateur ethnological societies and the War Department was commonplace, and a figure like Henry Rowe Schoolcraft exemplifies those connections. With Henry's help, Anishinaabe tribal nations were categorized into political groups by the United States government, with little regard to Anishinaabe sovereignty or political organization. Maps produced during this period demonstrate an obsessive concern with tracking indigenous linguistic "stocks." Linguists and ethnologists like Henry Rowe Schoolcraft were essential to this process, as they fed collected information about indigenous tribal nations to government bureaucrats in Washington who then grouped the Anishinaabeg together and made plans for treaties and removal.

[103] Schoolcraft, *The Literary Voyager*, xxiv-xxiii.

& history," "to employ your leisure moments, in putting on record all you can find, among them, worthy of it." Henry emphasizes, "It is a debt you owe to them, & to the country, and such labours, if well directed & well executed, will form your own best claim to remembrance." Perhaps alluding to his wife's early death, Henry notes, "Life is, at best, short, & he only lives well, who does something to benefit others." Henry concludes with the promise, "I can assure you, that you shall have final & full literary credit."[104] This assurance attests to the importance of the concept of literary property to George. In this letter, Henry assumes that George, an Anishinaabe-Scotch-Irish man, understands literature as property and his own labor of collecting and translating as bestowing rights of ownership of these literary materials. The concept of "proprietary authorship" was much on the minds of American Indian authors in the nineteenth century, whether credited with their work or not.[105] Despite his promises, Henry Schoolcraft did not give his brothers-in-law the literary credit they were due, which, along with his pompous attitude, relative wealth, and nepotism, contributed to his break with parts of the Johnston family as brother turned against brother to expose Henry's wrongdoing.[106] Henry eventually lost his job as Indian agent in 1841, however, when Whigs gained the presidency in the 1840 election. Schoolcraft also translated many Anishinaabe stories for her husband and even wrote her own stories, but she received even less credit than her brother for these contributions, her literary inheritance belonging to her husband as much as her monetary one. While Henry copied and

[104] Chase S. Osborn and Stellanova Osborn, *Schoolcraft Longfellow Hiawatha* (Lancaster: The Jaques Cattell Press, 1942), 589.
[105] Phillip Round, *Removable Type: Histories of the Book in Indian Country, 1663-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 150.
[106] Marjorie Cahn Brazer, *Harps Upon The Willows: The Johnston Family of the Old Northwest* (Ann Arbor: Historical Society of Michigan, 1993), 251-252; 302-307; Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 85.

rewrote "obsessively" in his wife's case, he did not apply "the same heavy-handed treatment" to his brothers-in-law's writings.[107]

Schoolcraft's poetry is a part of American poetry's story not despite of but because of Henry. A social climber, Henry communicated with political figures like Secretary of War John C. Calhoun and Michigan Territory Governor (later Secretary of War and Henry's major patron) Lewis Cass. Since Henry's position as Indian agent required frequent travel, the Schoolcrafts often communicated through letters, in which they included poems. In caring for his own literary remains and correspondence as a government agent, Henry included his wife's poetry and letters. These same poems and correspondence, however, demonstrate that Schoolcraft made her own choices about genre, gender, and race and related those choices to Anishinaabe traditions. In opposition to Henry's view that indigenous poetry elides form and meter, Schoolcraft's poetry evinces careful attention to craft and poetic genre as they relate to both Anishinaabe and Scotch-Irish literary traditions. Moreover, Schoolcraft shaped these poetic decisions in ways that would effect change in her social relations through publication in a manuscript magazine and correspondence with her husband.

The Muzzeniegun or Literary Voyager: Social Effects of Schoolcraft's Poetic Publications in a Manuscript Magazine

In the Sault Ste. Marie winter of 1826-27, Henry Schoolcraft circulated at least fifteen issues of a handwritten magazine called *The Muzzeniegun or Literary Voyager* (Musseniegun being Anishinaabemowin for book or magazine) among friends. Composed mostly of his own writings, the *Literary Voyager* also included contributions on aspects of Indian life by his wife

[107] Ibid.

and others in the form of articles, poems, announcements, and other genres.[108] Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's publication in this magazine is notable, since no other evidence that she published her poetry—apart from her translations of Anishinaabe stories published under Henry's name—has been found, and she left no organized set of manuscripts at her death.[109] The *Literary Voyager* borrows from earlier patterns of publication since as a manuscript magazine its first audience was family and friends in Sault Ste. Marie.

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[108] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 223. Several issues of the *Literary Voyager* were lost in the moving process from the Smithsonian Institution to the Library of Congress. Schoolcraft, *The Literary Voyager*, viii, xiv. Henry's poems and articles appear in the *Literary Voyager* alongside Schoolcraft's poems, sometimes instructively juxtaposed as with Henry's allegory of "The Vine and the Oak, which presents a marriage model between a man and woman, the oak (man) supporting the vine (woman). The story appears in the first issue of the *Literary Voyager* in December of 1826 after Henry's poem about adapting to life at Sault Ste. Marie, "Lines, On Coming to Reside at Sault Ste. Marie." Henry's allegory tells of the conversation, disagreement, and compromise between a vine growing alongside a "thrifty" oak. In this allegory, Henry genders the vine female and the oak male with gender relations corresponding to those of early nineteenth-century Anglo-America. It is not difficult to imagine this allegory as a thinly-veiled commentary on the gender dynamics of the Schoolcrafts' marriage, with Henry writing himself as the oak and Jane as the vine. As the oak, Henry places limitations on his wife's literary ambitions, asserting that while she may seek literary fame, she must nevertheless lean upon her husband for support and serve as a pretty "ornament" to his government and literary career rather than the other way around. The oak appeals to natural reason and evolutionary logic to dismiss the vine's desires to grow "*independently*," pointing out the practical or physiological barriers to such growth. Instead, the oak threatens that if the vine does not bind herself to him, she will fall from her own weight or become hopelessly entangled among the other trees. This logic lends another meaning to Henry's assertion that Indian speeches and songs may be "too violent an application" of poetry. The real violence underlying Henry's accusation of generic illegitimacy is that Schoolcraft's work must filter through her husband as literary censor, to be preserved and uplifted, like the vine in the allegory, or rejected and discarded. Another instructive poetic composition by Henry, "The Choice Addressed to Miss J.J.," overtly directs Schoolcraft's behavior as a wife. Although filled with praise, one stanza stands out: "In person comely, rather than renowned, / In books conversant, rather than profound, / With too much sense to slight domestic duty / Or sigh to shine a wit, or flaunt a beauty / This have I fondly wished, 'heavens last best gift' to be / Such have I seen thee oft, & often hope to see." Amid the poem's otherwise lavish praise, this stanza is striking as it seems less a characterization of Schoolcraft than a mandate for Henry's future wife. Ironically, it was the connections Henry made through Schoolcraft that supported their family for much of their lives, not Henry's literary career, which he nevertheless built on the work of the Johnston family as he published and reprinted their stories, translations, and other cultural materials throughout his life. Although Henry assembled a collection of Schoolcraft's poems after her death in 1842 for print publication, he never published this collection, perhaps because such publication would have broken the norms of posthumous collections by women at the time. Amanda Gailey examines the phenomena of collected editions by childless women poets in *Proofs of Genius: Collected Editions from the American Revolution to the Digital Age*. Such collections, Gailey argues, were "circulated privately as a way of collecting and distributing the dead woman's intellectual property to friends and family and honoring her talents posthumously with the acknowledgment that she eschewed in life." In contrast, Schoolcraft's poetry circulated privately among friends and family during her lifetime through the *Literary Voyager*, and, at the time of her death, there was no need to redistribute her intellectual property as it clearly belonged to her husband Henry under the laws of coverture. According to Gailey, the genre of the collected edition was tied closely to property rights, which were nebulous at best for Schoolcraft as a married American Indian woman in the early nineteenth-century United States.

[109] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 221-222.

In the eighteenth-century United States and the colonies that preceded them, manuscript cultures took various forms, from literary clubs to college societies, and from jests and displays of wit at card games to anecdotes around the tea table.[110] In these social circles, manuscript was often more influential than print. While poems and letters in manuscript did not circulate to as many people as print, they circulated more selectively to people in power or within extended social networks. For Schoolcraft, this included her husband's benefactor and Michigan Territory Governor Lewis Cass as well as influential friends in New York City.

The model of belles lettres and literary clubs illuminates the kind of social, cultural, and political work that Schoolcraft's manuscripts were doing during her lifetime. Historically, belles lettres works were "scripts for occasions of shared pleasure," devoted to the "act of keeping conversation amusing and alive" by "reactivating social pleasures or in giving body to rituals of sociability."[111] These writings were by design ephemeral, devoted to the advancement of conversation and social pleasure. Mastery of belles lettres was a marker of civility and a reward in itself since it promoted social well-being and happiness.[112] Within these social groups and conversational exchanges, steering clear of print was often a conscious decision on the part of the writers. Clubs and salons earned a reputation for "exclusivity, intimacy, and an aura of personal connection" partially through a preference for manuscript writing, which was often seen as more socially and culturally effective.[113] Thus, literary scholars cannot simply assume that early American women writers like Schoolcraft chose manuscript over print because print publication was unavailable to women. Rather, some manuscript cultures—including those of women—

[110] Shields, *Civil Tongues*.
[111] Ibid., xxv.
[112] Ibid., xxxvii.
[113] Ibid., xxx.

favored the intimacy of manuscript correspondence and limited circulation to the often-anonymous print culture through the 1830s.[114]

The *Literary Voyager* emerged from a literary club Henry formed. Over the course of the nineteenth century, clubs of all kinds became popular among all social classes, ethnic groups, and genders.[115] As print became more widespread and cheaper, these clubs, centered around common interests like literature or history, often published records of meetings and important events. As with clubs today, however, the true value of these societies was in the social connections they forged and maintained. Although only a few copies of each issue of the magazine were produced, and sometimes only a single copy, the *Literary Voyager* circulated over a wide geographic region. Fifteen issues of the *Literary Voyager* were produced between December, 1826 and April, 1827, with each issue averaging twenty-four pages and measuring eight inches by fourteen inches in size.[116] After being read aloud by Henry at the literary society, each issue circulated among Sault Ste. Marie citizens before traveling to Henry Schoolcraft's friends in Detroit (among them Lewis Cass and his wife), New York and other cities on the East Coast.[117]

Manuscript writing had certain social advantages for women in early America as what Caroline Wigginton calls a "relational publication." She argues that early American authors, including and in some areas especially women and minorities, negotiated their neighborhood social relations through "interpersonal exchange," using intimate practices of composition and

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[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid., 326.
[116] Schoolcraft, *The Literary Voyager*, xxvi. Publishing a print magazine was a lifelong ambition for Henry, and he produced at least one issue of another magazine called *The Bow and Arrow* while living at Mackinac in 1833. He had planned to publish a magazine on American Indian topics since 1825 with the proposed title of *Indian Annals* and a format similar to the *North American Review*, however, was unsuccessful in this endeavor.
[117] Ibid., xv, 167.

circulation to manage and change their relationships with each other and their communities.[118] In these manuscript circles, it was common for writers to adopt pseudonyms as "fixed personae during the life of the company." Known to the people involved, proper names were only restored posthumously or when the group dissolved or published the conversations in print. Cognomens functioned to elevate manuscript correspondence from the everyday, with writers often choosing neoclassical nicknames to convey a sense of nobility.[119] Schoolcraft, for example, almost always signed her Anishinaabe stories as Leelinau, but her poetry as Rosa, attaching different identities to different genres. As Rosa, Schoolcraft contributed many lyrical, often sentimental, and personal poems to the *Literary Voyager*, ranging in topic from family relations to suffering and illness.[120] In these poems, Schoolcraft merges English, Scottish, and Anishinaabe forms to create poems that speak to her husband, friends, and relatives. These poems address interpersonal issues in Schoolcraft's life relating to her marriage, health, and creative endeavors and are often directly addressed to an identifiable person in the title or body of the poem. Through poetry, Schoolcraft engages in the kind of interpersonal, relational exchange that Wigginton argues early American women and minority writers used to shape their communities.

In her poem "The Contrast, a Splenetic Effusion," dated March, 1823, Schoolcraft draws from English traditions associating the spleen with a melancholic state to express her past discontent with her marriage and the contrasting emotions it has inspired in her. She proclaims, "With pen in hand I shall contrast, / What I have felt—what now has past!" She goes on to recount how she used to derive joy from the pain of mended relationships: "That to have been one moment pain'd, / Seem'd more like bliss but just attain'd." She clarifies that this joy at pain

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[118] Caroline Wigginton, *In the Neighborhood: Women's Publication in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016), 6, 20.
[119] Shields, *Civil Tongues*, 263-264.
[120] Schoolcraft, *The Literary Voyager*, 8, 26-27, 71, 84-85, 97, 138-142, 142-43, 156, 157-58.

was possible because "For well I knew that each behest, / Was warm'd by love—convincing test!" This is how she passed her younger days, she writes; "My efforts kindly were receiv'd— My feelings *ever were* believ'd." Schoolcraft then changes the perspective to the present: "But ah! how soon the scene has chang'd, / Since I have in love's mazes rang'd." Falling in love with Henry has changed not only Schoolcraft's relations with other people but also her mood. She notes, "Oft in tears I sigh and languish, / Forc'd to bear in silent anguish— / Looks strange— expressions oft unkind— / Without an intercourse of mind. / Constrain'd to bear both heat and cold— / Now shun'd—now priz'd above all gold." This poem characterizes Schoolcraft's marriage with Henry as a stormy one, as she compares love to "mazes" and bemoans their inability to have "an intercourse of mind." Her lover's temperament, it seems, is tempestuous, sometimes kind, sometimes cold. She ends the poem, "In converse now, we take delight, / Oft joining in fair fancy's flight. / Now elate—with pleasure smiling, / Kindness mutual—time beguiling. / But how transient! oh how soon, / Every bliss is turn'd to gloom!"[121]

This poem borrows from several traditions in its glorification of friendship or companionship over love's fleeting pleasures. The subtitle, "a Splenetic Effusion" points to the context of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century medicine, when emotions were supposedly linked with bodily humors and physiological traits. The most famous eighteenth-century poem referencing the spleen is Alexander Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, with its visit to the "Cave of Spleen," and in the same century, Anne Finch and Matthew Green published well-known poems called "The Spleen," associating the spleen with persistent melancholy associated with the embodied experience of the sublime.[122] In the eighteenth century, the spleen designated both a

[121] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 116.
[122] Richard A. Barney, "The Splenetic Sublime: Anne Finch, Melancholic Physiology, and Post/Modernity," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 39 (2010): 3-4.

dysfunctional human organ and associated symptoms such as "anxiousness, listlessness, mental distraction, and, more prominently, the affliction of melancholy." [123] While anatomists rejected the idea that the spleen caused "vapors, hypochondria, and melancholy," in the early eighteenth century, the public continued to use the spleen as a convenient catch-all for symptoms that seemed to have no clear cause until the late nineteenth century. [124] Later writers associated splenetic dysfunction as the source of a nervous disorder that bestowed upon the sufferer "an acute sensibility that verged on spiritual insightfulness."[125] Given Schoolcraft's ill health throughout her life, she would have likely associated the bouts of melancholy that she describes in this and other poems with this kind of splenetic physical illness that was also thought to bring with it a keener emotional awareness, spirituality, and creativity. The "Splenetic Effusion" thus could refer to Schoolcraft's own composition of the poem as a product of the melancholy and overflowing emotions that she associates with the spleen and with creativity. With this poem, Schoolcraft demonstrates how she funnels her melancholy, suffering, and discontent with her marriage into poetry that merges ideas about the spleen with Romantic-era notions of creative genius inspired by melancholy—and implicitly against Henry's assertion that the "Indian" poetic tendency was merely backward-looking, "To lament, and not to hope."

In another of her poems written for Henry, "An answer, to a remonstrance on my being melancholy, by a Gentleman, who, *sometimes* had a *little pleasing* touch of melancholy himself," Schoolcraft merges the Romantic idea of artistic melancholy with Anishinaabe ideas about the Auttissookaunuk, muses that live at the four cardinal points of the earth and assist storytellers in the creation of stories, called *auttisookaunun*.[126] Storytellers were not simply authors in

[123] Ibid., 16.
[124] Ibid., 18-19.
[125] Ibid., 23.
[126] Basil Johnston, *The Manitous: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), 240.

Anishinaabe societies; they were dreamers and visionaries whose stories contributed to Anishinaabe wisdom and knowledge and sometimes prophesized the future as well.[127] In wintertime, storytellers would call upon the Auttissookaunuk to inspire them to create a story. In her poem to Henry, Schoolcraft melds Romantic ideas about melancholy and creativity with Anishinaabe ideas of the storyteller or poet deriving inspiration from the Auttissookaunuk or muses to counter Henry's critique of her emotions.

Schoolcraft begins with a poetic shout that resembles the Anishinaabe storyteller calling upon the muses at the beginning of a story: "Still—still! the same—my friend you cry! / Still—still! the same—until [sic] I die!—" Schoolcraft then offers Henry an alternative: "Unless *your* friend, and *mine,* soft maid— / I chase away to the darksome shade." Schoolcraft cannot abandon the muses, presented as melancholy, explaining, "With her, too sure, would *there* repair, / The joys that make, dull life, more fair." Despite causing suffering, melancholy makes a "dull life" more beautiful, more joyful. Schoolcraft admits her inability to renounce this muse, declaring:

> Should I awhile her presence shun,
> And join in frolic, laughter, fun—
> Yet would my heart, unconquer'd fly,
> And woo her back, with many a sigh,
> Or with her walk the haunted groves,
> Where lovely sorceress, Fancy roves,
> Such silent joy in her there lies,
> 'Tis but to taste them once—and prize.[128]

To feign cheerfulness would be to deny her heart's love of melancholy's creative powers, and Schoolcraft will not submit to such a fate for anyone's sake, including Henry's. Melancholy, to her, is a pleasant companion, romantic friend, and source of creativity. This characterization of

[127] Ibid., xxii, 172.
[128] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 144.

creative inspiration speaks to both western and Anishinaabe ideas about thanking and even courting the muses who inspire you as a storyteller.

Yet, at the end of the poem, Schoolcraft offers Henry a compromise. She concludes:

> Since then such bliss you'd have me lose,
> Teach me to gain thy pleasing muse.
> Enchanted then I'll sing my lays!
> And cheerfull [sic] spend my happy days.[129]

Taken together with its ironic title, Schoolcraft's ending could be read as insincere or at least teasing. Since Henry possesses such a pleasant disposition (which she has already hinted he does not), let him teach her to write, to "sing [her] lays," through pleasant inspiration rather than melancholy. By choosing the word "lays" to represent her poetry, Schoolcraft alludes to Scottish songs and ballads as another source of inspiration for her poetry. Ultimately, though, Schoolcraft reprimands Henry for criticizing her mood, accusing him of being no more pleasant than she and, additionally, a worse poet. With this ending, Schoolcraft denies any moral to her poem, admitting that for her there is no solution to the problem that her poetic creativity comes from a melancholy channeled by the Scottish lay and the Anishinaabe muses. She does, however, accomplish her social purpose of silencing Henry's critique of her emotions. With her poem to Henry, Schoolcraft validates her reasoning in both Romantic and Anishinaabe terms and refuses to dismiss her own suffering to provide Henry with the closure he seeks as a husband and literary correspondent.

Another poem, "Lines written under affliction," further highlights Schoolcraft's interest in how Romantic ideas of the present and the past become complicated when combined with Anishinaabe knowledge. As an Anishinaabe Christian, Schoolcraft modifies conventionally religious poems by adding Anishinaabe elements and refusing poetic closure that requires

[129] Ibid.

dismissing her own suffering, both physical and emotional. Composed of five stanzas, each four lines long, the poem begins with the rhetorical question: "Ah! who, with a sensative [sic] mind possest, / Recalls the swift years that are gone, / Without mingled emotions—both bitter and blest, / At the good and the ill he has known." The next stanza expounds upon this idea: "Or, how could a beautiful landscape please, / If it showed us no feature but light? / 'Tis the dark shades alone that give pleasure and ease, / 'Tis the union of sombre and bright." [130] The necessity of both light and dark, joy and suffering is a Romantic idea but also an Anishinaabe idea. The Thunderers, who mostly benefit humans, and the Underwater Manitous, who mostly harm humans, are both necessary to an Anishinaabe worldview. These supernatural persons are relational, and their battles cause the thunderstorms that roll over the Great Lakes and sometimes harm humans.

Yet, in the next stanza, Schoolcraft switches to a Christian view: "So wisely has God in his mercy ordain'd, / That the bitterest cup he has cast, / Is mixed with a sweetness, which still is retain'd, / To be drank and enjoyed at the last." In these lines, Schoolcraft refers to death, "the bitterest cup," "enjoyed at the last," whose bitterness is made "sweet" by the promise of Jesus's death and resurrection. The next stanzas builds upon this Christian premise of redemption to posit that difficult moments are religiously instructive: "Thus feelings are chasten'd, and life is refin'd, / By pangs that misfortunes convey, / To minds that have faith, and to bosoms resign'd, / To bear—to forbear, and obey."[131] Chasteness and refinement—two qualities associated with women in the nineteenth century—are acquired through faith during misfortune and resignation during affliction. The religious sense, rather than supporting the optimism of the second stanza, ends up resigning women to obey, here, presumably, God, but historically also her husband.

[130] Ibid., 126.
[131] Ibid.

In the *Literary Voyager*, Henry introduces this poem as one of the "poetical accomplishments of 'Rosa.'" He criticizes "a naivette [sic] in her productions which is often the concomitant of taste and genius." "The chastness [sic] of her images," he effuses, "the lively strain of piety and confiding hope in the dispensations of Providence, and the pensive serenity which marks her favorite morning and evening landscapes, are so many traits which arrest our admiration." Henry tempers this praise with a qualification regarding the author's racial background: "When to these positive recommendations of her poetic attempts, we add the limited opportunities of her early life, and the scenes of seclusion [in] which so much of her time had been passed, we think there is still greater cause to appreciate and admire." He notes that this poem is remarkable for its "energy and consonance."[132] Henry thus advises his readers to view the poem in a Christian religious context of a chaste woman's obedience to God and her husband. Although advocating resignation to suffering, the poem does not possess the Christian uplift characteristic of the conclusions of many nineteenth-century religious poems. By omitting this expected ending, Schoolcraft changes the form of the conventional Christian poem, not only through Anishinaabe and Romantic undercurrents, but also by refusing the temporal closure that hinges on the dismissal of her own suffering as an Anishinaabe woman and wife.

In another poem, "By an *Ojibwa Female* Pen: Invitation to sisters to a walk in the Garden, after a shower," Schoolcraft adapts the eighteenth-century English poetess tradition to an Anishinaabe worldview to address her sisters after a thunderstorm. Motion is central to an Anishinaabe worldview, even encoded in the language. Anishinaabemowin, the Anishinaabe language, is constituted primarily of verbs, thus emphasizing actions and processes over objects

[132] Schoolcraft, *Literary Voyager*, 84.

and things.[133] Twentieth-century Anishinaabe writer Gerald Vizenor describes this concept as "transmotion." He explains, "Native transmotion is an original natural union in the stories of emergence and migration that relate humans to an environment and to the spiritual and political significance of animals and other creations."[134] At a fundamental level, Anishinaabemowin grammar distinguishes between animate and inanimate things, rather than masculine and feminine, as in many European languages.[135] "As our language teaches us, to live is to be in motion," Anishinaabe critic Margaret Noodin writes; "The very word for life, *bimaadizi,* stems from *bmode* (to crawl) and *bmose* (to walk) with the little morpheme 'bi,' meaning 'right here' being perhaps the most meaningful part of the etymology."[136] The lack of separation in Anishinaabemowin between nature and culture or nature and people compared to modern European languages is another important distinction.[137] Vizenor's transmotion also implies "survivance, a reciprocal use of nature, not a monotheistic, territorial sovereignty."[138]

In Schoolcraft's poem "By an *Ojibwa Female* Pen," this Anishinaabe worldview appears through the speaker's excitement about witnessing nature as animated by the passing storm. At the beginning of the poem, the speaker entreats her sisters in the poetess tradition: "Come, sisters come! the shower's past, / The garden walks are drying fast, / The Sun's bright beams are seen again, / And nought within can now detain."[139] Schoolcraft thus borrows from the eighteenth-century invitational tradition of the letter, but she sweetens this entreaty through images of nature

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[133] Scott Richard Lyons, 4, *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 84.
[134] Gerald Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 183.
[135] Lyons, *X-Marks*, 84-85.
[136] Margaret Noodin, "Megwa Baabaamiiaayaayaang Dibaajomoyaang: Anishinaabe Literature as Memory in Motion," in *The Oxford Handbook of Indigenous American Literature*, ed. James H. Cox and Daniel Heath Justice (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 175.
[137] Lyons, *X-Marks*, 85.
[138] Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses*, 15.
[139] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 108.

in the process of change after the storm. This focus on nature as part of animate processes aligns Schoolcraft's poem with Anishinaabe views of transmotion. Schoolcraft's speaker tempts her sisters with a walk in the garden during this special time after the rain to witness nature in the process of transformation.

As mentioned earlier, Anishinaabemowin does not separate humans conceptually from nature. In Anishinaabemowin, the root word for custom, *izhi*, describes both nature and human practices of doing something in a specific way, with intentionality.[140] Schoolcraft's poem describes a kind of *izhi*, as the speaker and her sisters celebrate the end of the rain with a customary walk in the garden to witness nature's transformation after the shower. Schoolcraft's poem personifies nature as "rain drops tremble" or "drip expiring," and the breeze's "whisp'ring breath" shakes water from the trees and scatters the clouds.[141] In the next stanza, however, Schoolcraft shifts to a more Romantic tone as she distills a moral from this natural scene. Schoolcraft preaches: "Thus sisters! shall the breeze of hope, / Through sorrow's clouds a vista ope; / Thus, shall affliction's surly blast, / By faith's bright calm be still'd at last; / Thus, pain and care,—the tear and sigh, / Be chased from every dewy eye; / And life's mix'd scene itself, but cease, / To show us realms of light and peace."[142] Schoolcraft thus pastes a Christian moral onto an Anishinaabe celebration of nature's animation after a storm. As this chapter will later discuss, in Anishinaabe worldviews storms are significant because they indicate supernatural fights between the Water Monsters and the Thunderbirds. Anishinaabe thought conceives of life as a "mix'd scene," containing storms and calm days, with both being necessary to provide balance in the world. By adding the Christian allusion to "realms of light and peace," however,

[140] Lyons, *X-Marks*, 85.
[141] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 108.
[142] Ibid.

Schoolcraft appeals to Christian rather than Anishinaabe interpretations of suffering. The poem ends with the idea of heaven as a permanent and restful escape from "life's mix'd scene."

In these poems, distributed to friends and family through Henry's manuscript magazine, Schoolcraft adapts English forms to incorporate Anishinaabe ideas about suffering's purpose. Schoolcraft's poems grapple with issues in her relationships, particularly her marriage with Henry. In these poems, she expresses her displeasure with Henry, countering his directive to be more cheerful and dutiful with wit and rhyme. Through these poems, disseminated to friends and family via the *Literary Voyager* as well as read aloud, Schoolcraft asserts her ideas about what it means to be an Anishinaabe-Scotch-Irish woman, wife, and poet. She does this by crafting poems that speak to both English and Anishinaabe traditions, incorporating ideas about melancholy and the spleen as well as storms and the muses. In these poems, Schoolcraft also continually reprimands Henry for his lack of compassion for her emotional and physical suffering. She looks instead to her sisters as she combines Christianity with Anishinaabe traditions to understand the place of her own suffering and hardship within her own kinship networks and religious narratives. Increasingly, Schoolcraft grappled with these religious and familial questions in her own poetry of mourning as she adapted the established western poetic genre of the elegy to her Anishinaabe-Christian worldview.

Schoolcraft's Formal Adaptations of the Elegy, Sonnet, and Ballad

Suffering was a recurring theme in Schoolcraft's life, as her own health problems were compounded by the death of a beloved child. On March 13, 1827, the Schoolcrafts' son, William Henry, suddenly died of croup at two years and eight months old. Poems written to commemorate his death demonstrate Schoolcraft's familiarity with the local ways early American poetry circulated and use of that knowledge in her own writing. The poems also evince

Schoolcraft's authorial decisions as she channeled her grief at her son's death into adaptions of the different poetic genres of the elegy, sonnet, and ballad.

Each of these poetic genres has its own literary history as well as national and class associations. Beginning with the elegy, Max Cavitch notes that this poetic genre was particularly popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as "a highly adaptive discursive resource, not just for mourning the death but for communicating and managing anxieties in contexts of survival."[143] The telos of the American elegy, which he argues was central to the emergence of local and national identities in eighteenth-century Anglo-America, is the "fulfillment of a specifically political, shared happiness that loss misnames."[144] Among the most famous of America's elegies were "Indian laments." In the nineteenth century, territorial and market expansion, the incorporation of Romanticism, and mourning practices that were increasingly domestic and entrepreneurial produced elegies that aspired beyond the usual small community-based idealizations of mourning.[145] Within this context, Indian laments or elegies emerged as a "white cultural totem against Indian wrath" for removal. Renato Rosaldo characterizes these Indian laments as "imperialist nostalgia," to which Cavitch adds that they channel erotic loss and ambivalent masculinity.[146]

The Puritan roots of the funeral elegy gave way to the Romantic elegy during the eighteenth century. Like earlier English pastoral elegies, Romantic elegies deploy death as a "trigger," as the poet uses the elegy to consider his or her own mortality and responds to this "existential anxiety" through the creation of poetry and assurance of "artistic immortality." In the

[143] Max Cavitch, *American Elegy: The Poetry of Mourning from the Puritans to Whitman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 3.
[144] Ibid., 24.
[145] Ibid., 128.
[146] Ibid; Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993).

Romantic elegy, the poet's worth is measured via "a demonstration of melancholic and artistic genius that takes the shape of an existential meditation" rather than the poetic inheritance of the earlier pastoral elegy.[147] During this period, the low form of the funeral elegy shifted to an individual, rather than communal, emphasis, leading to "more dramatic expressions of grief" and the "sentimental strain of the elegy." These sentimental elegies would predominate the elegiac form in the nineteenth century and were considered by some to be the domain of women, middle class writers, and provincial poets.[148]

Early American women writers not only adopted the elegiac form but adapted it to their own uses by rejecting elegiac conventions and consolation that failed to assuage their personal grief for their loved ones.[149] Conventionally, elegists address questions of death and dying to bridge the distance between themselves and their loved ones.[150] For instance, the Puritan funeral elegy funneled personal grief into a kind of communal unity through religious values that reinvigorated the body politic and enforced social order, particularly after the loss of a vital member of the community like a grown man.[151] Early American women writers revised the Puritan elegiac tradition to reject communal consolation and moral platitudes, instead writing elegies focused on individual and specific losses without using the dead to the community or nation's ends.[152]

Given the colonialist roots of elegies for American Indians, why did Schoolcraft choose to write in this poetic form? First, as this literary history demonstrates, elegies are a social form

[147] Julia Penn Delacroix, "Writing with an Iron Pen: Gender and Genre in Early American Elegy" (dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2013), 136-137.
[148] Ibid., 144-145.
[149] Ibid., 2.
[150] Ibid., 3.
[151] Ibid., 8.
[152] Ibid., 14.

for expressing grief often used by women writers. Writing a poem for a dead family member in the nineteenth century was both a personal expression of grief and a family duty to commemorate a relative's passing. In her elegy for her deceased son, Schoolcraft participates in an American elegiac tradition that erases American Indian peoples and traditions. Yet, she also engages in the elegiac tradition of early American women writers who wrote elegies that defied convention to emphasize the importance of their individual loss and suffering. These elegies pay homage to the dead without incorporating them into a national or religious project that is potentially harmful for the living.

The elegy that Schoolcraft wrote for her young son, "Elegy On the death of my son William Henry, at St. Mary's" offers little consolation and an intimate, sentimentalized form of mourning. Written in nine numbered stanzas, with some stanzas rhyming ABAB and some with only two rhyming lines or slant rhymes, the elegy has an anguished tone. As she begins the poem, Schoolcraft fixates on the body of her child, which she does not imagine as corrupt and rotten, as in Puritan funeral elegies, but rather as frozen in time. Schoolcraft begins the poem as if speaking directly to her son: "May the winds softly blow / O'er thy lone place of rest / And the white drifting snow / Repose light on thy breast." William Henry died in March, so there would have been snow still on the ground when the family buried him. The next two stanzas shift to spring:

> And when May in her bloom,
> A soft verdure shall bring
> I shall deck thy loved tomb
> With the flowerets of Spring
>
> The buds as they swell
> Ere they bloom on the tree
> I shall gather as emblems
> Of beauty and thee.[153]

[153] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 132-133.

Here, as in the Miscodeed story's combination of manitous and Christian ideas of the soul's resurrection, Schoolcraft blends Anishinaabe stories and Christian ideas. She calls the buds on the tree that she collects before bloom "emblems" of her son's beauty, just as Miscodeed's "emblem" is the spring flower, since the buds picked before bloom symbolize her son's death before reaching maturity. While Miscodeed's life is a short fourteen years, William Henry's life is shorter still. In both contexts, the allusion to flowers highlights the shortness of the growing season in the Great Lakes, which mirrors William Henry's short life.

The word "emblem," used in both the Miscodeed story and the elegy for William, is significant within another Anishinaabe context, resonating as a heraldic device with the Anishinaabe clan structure of the *dodem* or totem, which binds family groups together under a common animal, such as the crane or bear. William's early death associates him with the Miscodeed, and in collecting buds from the tree for her son's grave, Schoolcraft attempts to halt the passage of seasons as death halted her son's life. Yet, as an Anishinaabe person, Schoolcraft knows that adaptation to seasonal extremity is crucial for survival. At heart, the miscodeed is a story of the transformative powers of hope and relationships in a harsh environment. As a flower, the miscodeed signals spring by braving the cold of a Great Lakes winter to give hope to the Anishinaabeg of the spring season to come. It is also a story about relationships. The small white bird, Miscodeed's patron manitou, saves the young girl by transforming her into something else. Just as the seasons change, relationships can change people. Although death, like winter, is inevitable in Schoolcraft's world, it signals transformation, not destruction. At this point in the poem, however, Schoolcraft wishes her son's death could jolt the seasons into disorder, mirroring her own emotional stasis in bereavement for her son.

After comparing her son's death to that of the miscodeed, Schoolcraft depicts a scene of sentimental mourning, watering her son's grave flowers daily with "tears of affection," which spread on the flowers "Like dewdrops." With this detail, Schoolcraft conforms to a norm of sentimental poetry, proving the sincerity of her grief with the indisputable evidence of her tears. Turning to her son after this display, Schoolcraft professes:

> And memory truly,
> Shall still keep in view,
> Thy image so lovely,
> So sweet and so true
>
> And my sighs shall increase,
> The soft murmurs of spring,
> As in thy requiem low,
> I so pensively sing
>
> While in thought I pursue,
> Thy pure spirit on high,
> Encircled with blisses,
> That never shall die.[154]

Although she mourns her son through sighs and songs, Schoolcraft takes Christian comfort in the thought of William's "pure spirit" happy in heaven, where he "never shall die." Resurrection for nineteenth-century Christians was not simply the reunion of body and soul but the rapprochement of the corpse and the mourner who together constitute the "remains."[155] With the image of her son happy in heaven, Schoolcraft reconciles herself with his death, approaching the closure typically sought in the era's Christian elegies.

What is unusual about Schoolcraft's elegy is that she does not stop with this image of heavenly contentment. Rather, she continues to meditate on the state of her own emotions using formal strategies that transfer personal grief to the reader:

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[154] Ibid.

[155] Susan M. Stabile, *Memory's Daughters: The Material Culture of Remembrance in Eighteenth-Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 179.

To know thou art blest
Half assuages the smart,
That sorrow inflicts
On a mother's fond heart

That heart where so late
Thou went pillowed in love
That can ne'er cease to mourn,
Though it cease to reprove.[156]

As the poem progresses, Schoolcraft's rhymes become more slant, expressing her inconsolable grief. Switching to slant rhyme jolts the reader from the complacency of regular rhyming endings, making the reader slow down and become more attentive. The slant rhymes transfer the irrecoverable loss of a child from the writer to the reader by mirroring the disorder of Schoolcraft's feelings and breaking down distance and somatic separation. Schoolcraft's formal manipulation supersedes the Puritan or even nineteenth-century American elegiac genre since in place of communal peace, Schoolcraft offers her own emotional disturbance as an Anishinaabe mother. Heightening this effect is the medium of transmission. Schoolcraft's elegies for her son were first written by hand and circulated in manuscript. Even in the unexpressive hand of the copyist, manuscript possesses the uncanniness of a personally directed missive. In the context of the *Literary Voyager*, Schoolcraft's grief was indeed contagious, as many of her friends and family, and even the attending physician, also wrote poems memorializing her son Willy.

Schoolcraft's submission to God's will emerges from the Puritan elegiac tradition, but she also displays her tears and commitment never to cease grieving in alignment with the sentimental tradition popular with nineteenth-century women writers. By refusing to accept religious or earthly condolences in the form of heaven or burial rituals, Schoolcraft rejects the temporal reassurance of shared elegies like those in the Puritan tradition. The passage of time,

[156] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 132-133.

from winter to spring, integral to both the western elegy and Anishinaabe tradition, does not lessen her grief or love for her dead child. Neither burial rituals nor requiems can assuage her motherly grief for her dead son. Singing her son's requiem does offer a brief respite in the form of a heavenly vision of her son, but as the poem continues, Schoolcraft does not leave the reader on that note of religious consolation.

Schoolcraft's refusal of full consolation at the end of her elegy to her son has roots in how Anishinaabemowin conceptualizes motherhood in relation to literature. In Anishinaabemowin, the word for raising a child, *nitaawigi'*, and the word for speaking or singing well, *nitaawe*, share a common root, *nitaa*, which means "tending to growth" or "nurturing."[157] Words with the *nitaa-* root share the sense in Anishinaabemowin of a learned skill or practice that brings about more life.[158] In this poem, Schoolcraft uses her poetic practice, which is related to the Anishinaabe concept of *nitaawe*, to mourn the child that she has worked so hard to raise, *nitaawigi'*. If she rejects easy consolation, it is because for the Anishinaabeg, mourning a child one has raised is no easy task, even for a poet. In her elegy, Schoolcraft connects her grief as a mother to the changing of the seasons, a process so slow as to be invisible, yet with clear effects. Gradually, the seasons change, and summer returns, but in the winter—in her darkest days as a mother—Schoolcraft must find the words to mourn her son, not for fame's sake, but for survival.

Schoolcraft turns to another form associated with women writers, and Romantics, with her sonnet for William Henry. Schoolcraft would have read and mastered the sonnet form from her father's collections of eighteenth and nineteenth-century books. Stephen Behrendt describes the sonnet as "a remarkably democratic literary vehicle, available to all sorts of writers and possessing the built-in advantage of brevity that particularly suited them to the daily and

[157] Lyons, *X-Marks*, 85.
[158] Ibid., 86.

periodical press, where they appeared in extraordinary numbers." The form also appealed to poets because of its "simultaneous openness to innovation and convention, to the apparently spontaneous and the visibly formulaic."[159] English sonnets in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were both "deeply personal expressions by speakers/writers who for one reason or another are constrained from speaking 'aloud' and who therefore voice their emotions and ideas privately" and "one of the most formalistic, and therefore most public, of all poetic forms."[160] By nature, sonnets were public forms "no matter how seemingly private the sentiments expressed in them were."[161] Through the act of reading sonnets, readers were trained in the art of sensibility, of sympathizing with their speakers.

As a poetic form with relatively strict rules about rhyme and meter, the sonnet is a particularly performative genre, usually ending with the resolution of emotional distress or a philosophical problem. Romantic-era women writers of the sonnet revised its form by subverting linear organization and denying poetic closure.[162] Schoolcraft's sonnet builds upon this generic innovation of open-ended sonnets by women writers. While she follows many of the sonnet's generic conventions as she grapples with how to temper her emotional response to her son's death, she does not perform her private sentiments for the public. Instead, her publication via manuscript magazine invites only an audience of close friends and family. Schoolcraft's sonnet is more religious than most, ending with the explicitly Christian promise of resurrection and reunification in heaven. Her sonnet, however, uses both Anishinaabe and Christian temporalities to staunch a personal suffering that defies consolation by reason alone.

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[159] Stephen C. Behrendt, *British Women Poets and the Romantic Writing Community*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 118.
[160] Ibid., 122.
[161] Ibid., 118.
[162] Ibid., 134.

Schoolcraft begins the poem by describing her process of grief: "The voice of reason bids me dry my tears, / But nature frail, still struggles with that voice; / Back to my mind that placid form appears / Lifeless, —he seemed to live and to rejoice, / As in the arms of death he meekly lay." Sonnets usually describe a mental process, a working out of a problem, and Schoolcraft's is no exception. She recounts in the present tense hearing the voice of reason tell her to stop grieving. Schoolcraft reports, however, that she has not yet learned to accept that advice, as "frail" nature still struggles in the present tense. Next comes a shift in the poem: unbidden, an image of her dead son appears in the past tense. The description of her son is contradictory. Schoolcraft depicts his form as "placid" and "Lifeless." Yet, she also states, "he seemed to live and to rejoice / As in the arms of death he meekly lay." In the present, Schoolcraft is remembering her dead son, whose image appears to her mind unbidden, as a kind of intrusive thought. Her son's image is given in the past tense, "he seemed to live and to rejoice," as a memory not a premonition. This memory or thought is an unsettling combination of past and present tense. In the living present, Schoolcraft knows her son to be dead, a "placid form appears / Lifeless." Her use of a dash, however, creates a contrast between the present, dead son and the past, alive son who is nevertheless dead: "he seemed to live and to rejoice, / As in the arms of death he meekly lay."[163] How could her son both be alive and dead? The next stanza offers answers to these temporal confusions.

Moving from this image of William Henry, Schoolcraft directly addresses her son, "Oh, Cherub Babe! Thy mother mourns thy loss, / Tho' thou hast op'd thine eyes in endless day; / And nought, on earth, can chase away my grief / But Faith—pleading the merits of the Cross, / And Him, whose promise gives a sure relief."[164] With these lines, Schoolcraft resolves the

[163] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 134.
[164] Ibid.

temporal issues clouding her image of William. Schoolcraft in the present addresses her son, pictured in the past but imagined to exist beyond time now, in the "endless day" of resurrection. She finds personal consolation through faith in Christianity and the promise of resurrection, since Christianity gives hope for the reunification of mother and child in heaven, if not on earth. At this point, Schoolcraft's poem seems to be a conventionally Christian take on the sonnet, with Christianity providing the answer to Schoolcraft's grief at the death of her child.

Yet Schoolcraft's shifts in tenses from the present to the past and back again before finally moving towards an imagined future hint at an Anishinaabe temporal twist on the open-endedness of Romantic-era sonnets by women writers. Schoolcraft's grief propels her thoughts back and forth in time as she struggles to come to terms with her son's death. Looking toward the future is not only a Christian response to death, it is also an Anishinaabe one. Christ's promise and the cross signal to Schoolcraft that her son's future life is secure, just as the Miscodeed signals to the Anishinaabeg that winter will soon end and spring will begin. Both Christian and Anishinaabe conceptions of time take a future orientation that assures community, if not individual, survival. The Miscodeed signals that long winters are almost over and that, although some Anishinaabeg may have died, the Anishinaabeg as a people live on. Christian ideas of resurrection promise a kind of human intimacy lost by death through the communion of souls in heaven. While Schoolcraft ultimately depends on the promise of resurrection to salve her grief at her son's death in her sonnet, in other poems she also looks to the Miscodeed and to a seasonal view of the world for reassurance of community survival in times of suffering.

While American poets turned to elegies for ostensibly dying Indians to construct a national American literature, American literary critics proposed Scottish literary romanticism, particularly the works of Sir Walter Scott, as a model for how American literature should create

a national literature by focusing on its indigenous landscape.[165] The poetry of Burns, Scott, Macpherson, and Campbell, along with Scottish ballads and songs, were widely popular with early North American audiences.[166] With Scottish emigration, Scottish culture became homogenized abroad, creating a sense of community among peoples who thought of themselves as belonging to different cultures in Scotland. As Scottish ballads crossed the Atlantic, they proved adaptable through their "combination of compelling themes and formal strategies for containment and transmission."[167] Often this sense of shared culture was achieved through the spread of Burns' poems and songs, which reached far into rural areas, not only in book form, but in newspapers, which reprinted individual poems, singers, and songsheets.[168] Burns was admired in nineteenth-century American periodicals for his "literary elegance, his intense yet hesitant religious belief, and his democratic and collectivist stance," as well as his "'authenticity.'"[169] American readers also associated Burns with "enthusiasm for simple, country life, and sometimes more specifically, a nostalgic construction of the 'home country.'"[170] His language, moreover, influenced nineteenth-century American writers through its "fidelity to community voice as well as his play with registers."[171]

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[165] Andrew Hook, Andrew, "Scotland, the USA, and National Literatures in the Nineteenth Century," in *Scotland and the Nineteenth-Century World*, ed. Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie, and Alastair Renfrew (New York: Rodopi, 2012), 37.
[166] Ibid., 46.
[167] Suzanne Gilbert, "Alliance and Defiance in Scottish and American Outlaw-Hero Ballads," in *Scotland and the Nineteenth-Century World*, ed. Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie, and Alastair Renfrew (New York: Rodopi, 2012), 71.
[168] Jason R. Rudy, "Scottish Sounds in Colonial South Africa: Thomas Pringle, Dialect, and the Overhearing of Ballad," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 71, no. 2 (2016): 202; Fiona A. Black, "Tracing the Transatlantic Bard's Availability," in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*, ed. Sharon Alker, Leith Davis, and Holly Faith Nelson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 57-59.
[169] Rhona Brown, "'Guid black prent': Robert Burns and the Contemporary Scottish and American Periodical Press," in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*, ed. Sharon Alker, Leith Davis, and Holly Faith Nelson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 74, 77.
[170] Ibid., 80.
[171] Robert Crawford, "America's Bard," in *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*, ed. Sharon Alker, Leith Davis, and Holly Faith Nelson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 105.

Literary scholars have considered ballads "ideal carriers of cultural information." Yet formal definitions of the ballad (as a poem possessing certain features like 4- and 3-beat lines in quatrain, rhyming *abcb*, a refrain, story, communal perspective or framing, and vernacular language) fail to capture the nineteenth-century appeal of the ballad. Instead, the ballad's popularity depended upon the reader's assumption that they had stood the test of time, regardless of when they were written or created. Ballads were "news that stayed old by remaining already familiar," appealing to readers through the promise to, a bit like modernism, "make it new" again, using mass culture to posit a return to older, more natural forms of expression.[172] As seemingly archaic verse, ballads flourished in modern mediums like mass print publications, partly succeeding "by pretending to be something else."[173] Like Indian elegies, the recording and transmission of ballads in the nineteenth-century United States was also a way of claiming an American literary tradition.[174] At a time when the American literary market was unpredictable and largely unprofitable, American authors like Longfellow saw the ballad's potential as a commercial and popular print form.[175] Although many ballads reinforced societal mores, particularly for women, they also expressed popular dissent and subversion of dominant discourses through outlaw ballads.[176]

Schoolcraft was a cultural inheritor of Scottish literature. Schoolcraft's poem "To my ever beloved and lamented Son William Henry" combines the Scottish ballad form with the persistent images of a dead child from sentimental poems like Ann Taylor's famous "My

[172] Michael Cohen, "Getting Generic: An Introduction," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 71, no. 2 (2016): 148; Meredith McGill, "What Is a Ballad? Reading for Genre, Format, and Medium," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 71, no. 2 (2016): 157.
[173] Ibid., 165-167.
[174] Ibid., 158.
[175] Ibid., 169.
[176] Gilbert, "Alliance and Defiance," 72.

Mother" (1804) and Anishinaabe references to the miscodeed to create a ballad that nods to Schoolcraft's Scottish and Anishinaabe heritage while also mourning her son's death. Reversing the rhetorical voice of "My Mother," in which a dead child addresses its mother, Schoolcraft addresses her dead child with refrains of "My Willy." Familiar images of her child reposing on her breast support conventional ideas of motherhood found in sentimental poems while images of her dead son as a dove call to mind both Christian and Anishinaabe stories.

In composing a ballad for her dead son, Schoolcraft merges the form of the ballad with themes from sentimental poetry and Anishinaabe allusions to stories about the miscodeed and thunderstorms. Schoolcraft begins with the question, "Who was it, nestled on my breast, / 'And on my cheek sweet kisses prest' / And in whose smile I felt so blest?" Her answer forms the refrain, which always ends with her son's name, "Willy."[177] Like the call-and-response structure of her questions and the ballad form, Schoolcraft's decision to refer to her son by "Willy," instead of William, Will, or Bill, pays homage to Schoolcraft's Scottish heritage.

The comfort Willy draws from his mother is not one-sided. Schoolcraft continues, "Who was it, wiped my tearful eye, / And kiss'd away the coming sigh, / And smiling bid me say 'good boy'? / Sweet Willy." "Eye" and "boy" are not true rhymes, with the more natural word to replace "boy" being "bye" in this context. Schoolcraft, however, is not yet ready to leave the past, emphasizing instead how her Sweet Willy consoled her. The next line, nevertheless, hints at the death to come. She writes, "Who was it, looked divinely fair, / Whilst lisping sweet the evening pray'r, / Guileless and free from earthly care? / My Willy." Schoolcraft's depiction of her child as looking "divinely fair" while saying his "evening pray'r" ends with the idea that he is "free from earthly care," a depiction usually reserved for the deceased. The next question

[177] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 135-137.

builds upon that hint: “Where is that voice attuned to love, / That bid me say ‘my darling dove’? / But oh! that soul has flown above, / Sweet Willy.”[178] Imagining her son as a dove leads into an image of his soul flying up to heaven, an image that also appears in the story of Miscodeed.

The next few lines build upon this sentimental imagery by comparing Willy’s cheeks to different flowers. She asks, “Whither has fled the rose’s hue? / The lilly’s [sic] whiteness blending grew, / Upon thy cheek—so fair to view. / My Willy.” Death changes her son’s cheeks from rosy red to lily white—beautiful even in death. The next line moves to his eyes: “Oft have I gaz’d with rapt delight, / Upon those eyes that sparkled bright, / Emitting beams of joy and light! / Sweet Willy.” Moving again to the past, Schoolcraft remembers the pleasure she gained from looking at her son’s eyes. She continues, “Oft have I kiss’d that forehead high, / Like polished marble to the eye, / And blessing, breathed an anxious sigh. / For Willy.”[179] With this image, Schoolcraft seems to be remembering times when she checked on her son during sleep, when his skin was an almost deathly “polished marble.”

The line between life and death is finally crossed in the next lines when Schoolcraft exclaims, “My son! Thy coral lips are pale, / Can I believe the heart-sick tale, / That I, thy loss must ever wail? / My Willy.” Although her son’s lips are pale with death, she cannot bring herself to believe that he is dead and as his mother she must mourn him. Nature joins in this atmosphere of mourning as, “The clouds in darkness seemed to low’r, / The storm has past with awful pow’r, / And nipt my tender, beauteous flow’r! / Sweet Willy.”[180] In this image, Willy is again a flower, this time caught in a powerful storm and killed. In an Anishinaabe context, the thunderstorm also suggests the deadly fights, thought to be the source of thunderstorms, between

[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid.

the Thunderbirds and the underwater manitous. Although mostly protective of the Anishinaabeg, the Thunderers can sometimes cause harm to people through carelessness or anger. This Anishinaabe allusion lends Willy's death a spiritual significance as both another Miscodeed and an innocent caught up in Anishinaabe supernatural struggles of the Great Lakes.[181]

Schoolcraft nevertheless ends the poem with a return to Christianity: "But soon my spirit will be free, / And I, my lovely Son shall see, / For God, I know, did this decree! / My Willy."[182] The only consolation that Schoolcraft can imagine in this ending is that in death she will see her son again, this time capitalized, conflated with Jesus, Son of God. Like Schoolcraft's sonnet, her ballad also ends with the Christian promise of resurrection, not simply for her son this time, but for herself as well. Yet the ballad also features Anishinaabe images of resurrection of a different kind in the parallels with the Miscodeed story and the spiritual significance of storms in Anishinaabe culture. Schoolcraft borrows the spirit of the ballad, its outlaw element, and places it within her own Scotch-Irish-Anishinaabe frame to address the death of her beloved son. With her ballad for Willy, Schoolcraft uses the spirit of rebellion not to defy human laws but to defy the power of death itself. The connection between mother and child is so strong that death cannot sever the ties. Schoolcraft insists that her spirit, like Miscodeed's, will soon be free from her body, and she will be reunited with her dead son. These formal and cultural innovations of the ballad form may have inspired Henry's assertion that the poem was worthy of preservation as a "specimen of native composition."[183]

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[181] For more on Anishinaabeg religion and the Thunderbirds and manitous, see: Smith, *Island of the Anishinaabeg*.
[182] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 135-137.
[183] Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo, 1851), 261.

THE KINSHIP DEMANDS OF SCHOOLCRAFT'S LETTER-POEMS

Anishinaabe formal entities are a necessary part of a critical repertoire for understanding how Schoolcraft's poetry functions within her cultural context. In letters, Schoolcraft's poems work like the *dodem* or clans of the Anishinaabeg to bind the Schoolcrafts together as a family in a single heartbeat and "band of love." Reading Schoolcraft's poems also necessitates thinking about Sault Ste. Marie and the scenario in which she was writing, as these offer contextual hints about the meaning of her poems, but also about Schoolcraft's procedure for choosing among poetic genres.

While Schoolcraft addressed her family through poetic genres such as the elegy, ballad, and sonnet for her dead son, she also used the medium of the letter as well as traditional Anishinaabe modes for family bonding. In her letters with the frequently absent Henry, Schoolcraft includes excerpts and sometimes entire poems, from witty requests to poetic parodies to reminders of affection and familial obligations. By trying out different poetic forms in her letters, Schoolcraft experiments with what those forms can do for her as an Anishinaabe-Scotch-Irish poet. Specifically, Schoolcraft uses the poetic genre of the letter-poem to hasten the affectionate return of her husband Henry to her home, drawing him away from his work for the federal government.

In an early American context, the popular practice of letter writing taught women to use publication to change their relationships and neighborhoods.[184] As a literary form, letters follow a strict formula, progressing from salutation, to body, to valediction and signature. This sequence mirrors the relationship between the correspondents, since the letter "concatenated a relationship

[184] Wigginton, *In the Neighborhood*, 13.

by enacting contact, separation, migration, and reunion."[185] Like early American women, Schoolcraft often entrusted her letters to friends or travelers, making them "vulnerable to delay, misdirection, and destruction."[186] In the nineteenth century it was common for newspapers to print letters, circulating them beyond their original audience.[187] Even before the advent of mass print production, certain letters were written with these larger audiences in mind, whether print audiences or friends and family. For instance, when writing of her young son's death, Schoolcraft must have anticipated that the letter she wrote to her brother George would also be shared among close friends and family as they learned of and mourned William Henry's death.

While Schoolcraft did not seek the public identity of an author through print publication, in her manuscript letters and poems, she entered major religious and anthropological debates by subtly using monogenetic principles to reject gender inequality. Literati and natural historians alike had long sought an explanation for racial differences across the globe. The prevailing view of monogenesis, which agreed with the biblical account of a single origin of humanity, argued that racial differences were a product of humans transforming physically as they moved into different environments and interacted with different peoples.[188] Schoolcraft wrote to Henry on January 15, 1838:

> I have often felt the want of your kind support & *authority* [.]…*public* duties bring their own fame & reward, when discharged faithfully—but the unobtrusive duties of domestic life are not *even* thought upon with all its cares & troubles & *incessant* appeals to forbearance & patience. Nor is a word spoken, in praise or encouragement to the devote person who sacrifices health & [illegible] in the fulfillment of those neglected duties, & yet human nature is the same in *Man* and *Woman*—perhaps the latter requires more in consequence?[189]

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[185] Ibid., 13-14.
[186] Ibid., 14.
[187] Ibid., 19-20.
[188] Katy L. Chiles, *Transformable Race: Surprising Metamorphoses in the Literature of Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2-3.
[189] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 43-44.

Although admitting the gendered separation of the spheres, Schoolcraft criticizes her husband's neglect of her domestic work, using the passive voice to note that "unobtrusive duties of domestic life are not *even* thought upon" to subtly admonish Henry's lack of "praise or encouragement."

Schoolcraft ends her appeal powerfully with an assertion phrased as a generalized statement about men and women that puts her on the side of monogeneticists in the religious and anthropological debate over the origin of humans. Schoolcraft's choice to write in modern poetic modes undermines nineteenth-century assumptions about American Indians as unalterably premodern. By employing contemporary poetic forms, Schoolcraft wields her assumed historicity as an American Indian against her literary modernity, catching nineteenth-century literary critics and "vanishing Indian" elegists alike in their own temporal-historical trap. Like these literary critics, Henry would classify and modulate Schoolcraft's poetry throughout their marriage. Through her poems and letters, however, Schoolcraft contested these characterizations of her character and writing by employing modern poetic genres and criticizing Henry for his attempts to control her literary production even as he neglected their family's emotional and material needs.

A letter from Schoolcraft at Mackinac to Henry in Detroit dated June 8, 1840 offers an example of how poetry served as a form of communication, bonding, and sexual intimacy for the Schoolcrafts. Henry spent much of 1840 defending himself from his brother-in-law William's accusations of nepotism and misuse of public funds, only to be dismissed in 1841 when the Whig Party came into power. These circumstances likely account for Henry's travel to Detroit, where the Schoolcraft family would spend the winter of 1840-1841 as Henry fought to retain his job

amidst these accusations and a change in presidential parties.[190] In the margins of the letter, Schoolcraft writes, "My ear-rings are gone, in the Wars of Fate— / And a pair of red-drops I would not hate," signing the couplet with her Anishinaabe penname "Leelinau."[191] Imbuing a domestic request for earrings with sexual tension and flirtation, Schoolcraft positions the purchase of earrings as an epic quest for her husband to distract him from career worries.

In the same letter, Schoolcraft deploys a poetic allusion to remind Henry of the lasting power of their love. She borrows the refrain from Thomas Campbell's "Ye Mariners of England" (1801), "And the stormy winds do blow," and transforms it into a couplet about the lasting power of her relationship with Henry. Schoolcraft writes, "'Tis in vain to complain, when the stormy winds do blow / But to trust, in the *love*—of *near* twenty years ago."[192] In addition to its Romantic overtones, imagining their marriage as beset by stormy winds also has Anishinaabe significance. As noted earlier, storms signify a fight between the Thunderers and the Underwater Manitous in Anishinaabe religion. It is hard to know if Henry would have found this comforting as a description of ever-returning natural contests, in which, beloved or not, humans played only a small and fragile part.

Schoolcraft emphasizes her familial worries in her commentary following the poem. She writes:

> How do you like my additional, last line? O how I long for the day when you & the children will be home again, to cheer my withering frame & heart—There's no place like home after all—'with wife, children & friends' but I must change the word *wife* to suit myself—& perhaps it would suit *you* better too—were the poor wife to be *changed* altogether for a new & better one—having grown old & worn out for any farther pleasure

[190] Brazer, *Harps Upon the Willows*, 302-310; Maureen Konkle, "Recovering Jane Schoolcraft's Cultural Activism in the Nineteenth Century," in *The Oxford Handbook of Indigenous American Literature*, ed. James H. Cox and Daniel Heath Justice (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 97.
[191] Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 158.
[192] Ibid., 159.

> *she can give*, except that her heart, is still, & ever has been, yours affectionately Jane J. Schoolcraft.[193]

Her children away at school on the East Coast, her husband traveling, Schoolcraft wonders if Henry appreciates home as she understands it, "'with wife, children & friends,'" an allusion to a William Robert Spencer poem. As Schoolcraft reminds Henry of their long-lasting intimacy, she also hints at possibly waning sexual desire, either on her part or that of her husband, with the description of herself as "having grown old & worn out for any farther pleasure." Schoolcraft depicts herself as "old" and "worn out," yet she maintains that her heart remains Henry's. Although Schoolcraft worries that the sexual aspect of their marriage is diminishing, her poem asserts that they must nevertheless trust in their love for each other, which has weathered life's storms for almost twenty years.

In another poem, contained in a letter to Henry that same summer, Schoolcraft performs a poetic welcome designed to make herself appear attractive and speed her husband's return home. In a letter written to her husband in Detroit on July 13, 1840, Schoolcraft says that she anxiously awaits Henry's return, "when," she writes, "I can say—Welcome, welcome to my arms, / All that constitutes life's charms; / Welcome day of sweet emotion, / To my heart of deep devotion— / Desponding hours, of grief away, / Upon that happy, happy day."[194] In this letter transformed into a poem, Schoolcraft elides precise meaning of "life's charms." As a flirtation with her husband meant to speed him home, the "charms" are her arms, the embrace of a loving wife. Read differently, however, Henry and their children constitute "life's charms" for Schoolcraft, and her poem is meant to speed them home so that she can be happy again.

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[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid., 149.

With its performative language, present-tense, and metonymy of "happiness" and "days," the poem works to enact the scene it describes—the reunification of Schoolcraft's family with her husband and children's return home. Schoolcraft projects an image for Henry of their happy future: "Upon that happy, happy day; / When faithful hearts in trust shall beat / In joyful unisons—so sweet— / Content shall banish every gloom, / And smiles of love our face illume, / Whilst Husband, Wife and Children dear, / In one strong band of love appear." Structurally, the poem mirrors its purpose, united in one long sentence held together by semi-colons. As with many of Schoolcraft's religious poems, this one concludes with an image of Christian salvation, this time for the whole family. Schoolcraft writes, "To heav'n with one accord we'll raise, / Our voices, in humble, grateful praise; / And spend in peace each coming year, / With naught on earth to make us fear; / Blest in each other's happy smile— / Reject the world, with all its guile, / Till summon'd to our rest above, / To live in God's supernal love."[195]

After the death of their first son, William Henry, Henry threw himself into government and church work, both of which frequently took him away from his wife, who preferred to remain near the Sault and her family. At the end of this poem, Schoolcraft appeals to her husband's Christianity to persuade him to prioritize his family over his career. At this stage in their lives, the work that first brought Henry to his wife and family now constantly carried him away from them. Viewed as an effort to repair their marriage, the poem gains significance as a performative attempt to reweave and reestablish the bonds of family, powerfully conceptualized by the Anishinaabeg as *dodem* or totem. Schoolcraft reminds Henry with this poem that reciprocity is part of the marriage agreement. Henry must remember his Christian responsibilities to his family as well as his government.

[195] Ibid.

In composition, however, Schoolcraft enacts this perceived break in their marriage through a break in form. Schoolcraft draws a hand after line seventeen on her letter, pointing to the last three lines of the poem in the right margin and explaining on the next page that she was "interrupted by visitors" as she was finishing her letter. As she was entertaining these visitors, Schoolcraft describes, "the Boat passed down, & so my politeness lost me the opportunity of finishing & mailing it in time, & awoke me from poetic fancy's flight, for the night, though I still hope the subject will be realized before long, when I shall *know, & feel* it to be *more* than fancy or song."[196] Through this poem, Schoolcraft hopes to bring about a future in which the poem's "subject will be realized" and she will "*know, & feel* it to be *more* than fancy or song." Schoolcraft designed the poem to have a powerful, domestic influence on her husband. When Schoolcraft returns to the poem, however, she appears more resolved in her Christianity. She concludes: "Reject the world, with all its guile, / Till summon'd to our rest above, / To live in God's supernal love."[197]

With this poem, which uses both Anishinaabe and Christian calls to familial duty, Schoolcraft crafts a poetic future for herself and her family in which they return home and live happily together. The Schoolcrafts, like other couples during their time, found that literary aesthetics and courtship went hand in hand, with polite literature being a socially acceptable means of expressing pleasure and desire. Moreover, manuscript was the preferred medium for communicating these messages of love.[198] Poetry was part of the Schoolcrafts' courtship, as their early letters testify, and with her letter-poems, Schoolcraft again extends an invitation to Henry to participate in her poetic flirtations. Schoolcraft's poetry summons the early days of their

[196] Ibid., 149.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Shields, *Civil Tongues*, 317.

marriage, not nostalgically, but to build their relationship in the present day. Revivifying the past, Schoolcraft's poems to Henry refuse the limitations of middle age and work obligations to incite their middle ground of love.[199] The domestic applications of Schoolcraft's letter-poems imbue Henry's earlier comment about American Indian songs and speeches being "too violent an application" of poetry with yet another meaning. From a present-day perspective, Schoolcraft applied poetry to unusual ends, weaving it into her relationships in ways that amused, instructed, and changed those relationships and may even change the way literary scholars think about American poetry's role in history.

CONCLUSION

While other writers, including Henry, resurrected Schoolcraft's literary oeuvre in a way that could be called a "too violent application" of poetry, Schoolcraft's manuscript poems likely

[199] Among Schoolcraft's Anishinaabe legends is "The Forsaken Brother. A Chippewa Tale," which tells a cautionary about family bonding. With their dying breath, an isolated father and mother entrust the care of their youngest son to his two older siblings. The older children agree to obey their dying parents' wishes, but regret their pledges in the spring. First the elder brother then the sister abandons their younger brother to seek out society, leaving the little brother with only emergency provisions and a promise to return. Both soon marry and forget their helpless brother, however, and he is forced scavenge for food, eventually following a pack of wolves that allow him to eat their leftover meat. One spring day, the older brother encounters his little brother with the wolves while fishing on the lake. The young boy plaintively sings, "Neesya, neesya, shyegwuh gushuh! / Ween ne myeengunish! / ne myeengunish! / My brother, my brother, / I am now turning into a Wolf!— / I am turning into a Wolf." The elder brother implores the boy, "'My brother, my brother, come to me,'" but the boy flees, singing, "'I am turning into a wolf!—I am turning into a wolf,' and howling in the intervals." As the older brother follows him, the younger brother transforms into "a perfect wolf,—still singing and howling, and naming his brother and sister alternately in his song," finally proclaiming, "'I am a wolf,'" and bounding into the woods. The older brother and sister regret abandoning their brother, and the sister never stops mourning until her death. Sibling bonds were particularly vital to the Anishinaabeg since siblings were of the same *dodem* and often lived together. Yet, when these parents die, the sibling bonds, once cherished, break apart, as the older siblings feel burdened with the care of their younger brother and abandon their isolated family home for larger society. Left without familial resources, the young brother turns to the wolves to help him live through the winter and in the spring transforms into a wolf. Schoolcraft knew firsthand of the importance of family bonds, often relying upon her mother and siblings to care for her during her frequent illnesses in the absence of her husband and children. While many of Schoolcraft's poems focus on spousal bonds, in "The Forsaken Brother" it is sibling bonds that matter, as they must sustain a family through hard times and harsh environments. When the siblings in the story neglect their pledge to take care of each other, the younger brother becomes a wolf and abandons human society as his siblings have abandoned him. We could also read this as Schoolcraft's directive to her own children, also a girl and a boy, to care for each other throughout life. Schoolcraft, *The Sound the Stars*, 177-180.

survived because of these literary adaptations. Henry took care to preserve his wife's poetic remains not because of but despite what he saw as their literary merit. Henry thought his wife's poetry both was and was not poetry. Moreover, Henry's own hubris often caused him to depict Schoolcraft as a poet inferior to himself, valuable as an informant but not as an author.

Henry's generic ideas about American poetry continue to be characteristic of our conceptions of poetic genre: how we teach our students poetry, what literary-historical archives we look at, and what archives we do not. Such debates, past and present, over genre are the reason we have these documents today. But if the archiving of these documents has participated in the hardening of expectations about poetry and its past meanings, at the same time, these documents preserve the Schoolcrafts' conflict over genre in ways that can help scholars change how we tell the story of American poetry. The Schoolcraft archive is remarkable for its preservation of correspondence and journals that give scholars greater insight into the ways that poetry functioned in early America across genres and mediums. These materials reveal that experimentation with different poetic genres and mediums was built into the practice of writing in the early nineteenth century, a practice that forged social bonds through shared literary tastes. Even as the middle ground of her region's daily life collapsed in a socio-economic sense, Schoolcraft maintained cross-cultural connections in her poetry, bridging physical and emotional divides in her marriage and extended literary circles.

Schoolcraft's frequent formal strategy of open-endedness calls our attention to the unfinished business of poetic change from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century. In Schoolcraft's world, poetry was resurrected through libraries and communities that passed on literary knowledge and genres. Her own poetry functioned with ritual in conjunction with a vision of the world in which events repeat, like seasons. These poems witness the fact that

Schoolcraft's formal choices as a poet cannot be reduced to one regime of production, hegemonic set of gender norms, religion, or nationalism. Instead, they have been constructed at the nexus of worlds, worlds that were themselves rapidly changing, and the poems jolt western poetic traditions to change the perceptions of history and refocus the role of inevitability that had become attached to poetry. Schoolcraft's poems sometimes cross the wires to make poetry that does Anishinaabe things. These poetic moments disturb the inevitability of poetic history, its role as enshrining transcendent fame or progressive national coming-into-being, in narrating the transition from early American elegies to modern and postmodern American poetry.

By writing poems, Schoolcraft helped to build literary repositories for the Anishinaabeg of the future, among them the twenty-first century Anishinaabe writer Louise Erdrich. For Erdrich, a major writer both in Native American literary circles and beyond, Schoolcraft is part of an Anishinaabe intellectual tradition whose practices of generic mixing have never gone away. Erdrich writes mostly fiction, but her novels partake of the same Anishinaabe worldview as do Schoolcraft's poems. Schoolcraft and Erdrich both ground their literary work in Anishinaabe motherhood as well as literary authority. Schoolcraft repeatedly writes poems to and for her children, and Erdrich takes her infant daughter with her to the Great Lakes to show her the rock paintings, a crucial genre for the Anishinaabeg that joins landscape and representation. These two writers existed in different historical times and write in different genres; they think differently about how literature vectors the past. Yet each challenges the story American literary scholars have told about American literary history and form.

"Books are nothing all that new" for the Anishinaabeg, Erdrich asserts, in *Books and Islands in Ojibwa Country*. She connects the word "*Mazina'iganan*"—the same word Henry Schoolcraft chose for the family magazine—to "*mazinapikiniganan*," the word for rock

paintings." [200] The better question, Erdrich suggests, is not *did* the Anishinaabeg have books but *why* did they have books? In other words, how do Anishinaabeg use books? Understanding Anishinaabe literature in Anishinaabe terms allows for new ways of telling the story of American literary history and American poetry. Instead of assuming that genres progress or decline, we may think of genres as zones of intercultural experimentation, as Schoolcraft and Erdrich bring Anishinaabe stories and ideas into poetry and prose written in English. Rather than poems attesting to a national maturation process such as the development of American literature, poems become mediations of familial, local, and larger affiliations, as poetry circulates not only nationally and transnationally but intimately and locally. Taking Schoolcraft's and Erdrich's writing into account means conceptualizing the archive of American poetry not as a monument but as a set of occasions for creativity and inclusiveness, reminders of how humans live within specific landscapes and relationships.

Schoolcraft and Erdrich's writing offers a reconception of the archive for American literary scholars, but what happens when there is not much of an archive? Archival absence or destruction is a frequent problem in the study of Native American literature, and that is where the next chapter begins. Unlike Schoolcraft's correspondence and manuscripts full of poems and stories, Simon Pokagon's archive was destroyed in a house fire. The next chapter will explore the limits of the archive as books and papers that let us speak with the dead, and ask what literary scholars can do instead by turning to the print archive and its cross-racial citations and borrowings.

[200] Louise Erdrich, *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2003), 5.

Chapter 2: The Birchbark Print Archive: Simon Pokagon's Poetic Adaptations

INTRODUCTION

Born in the St. Joseph Valley to a civil chief of first rank in the Potawatomi tribe, Simon Pokagon is most famous for his noonday address under the Liberty Bell at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. Over his lifetime, he represented his tribe at the Capitol and frequently spoke of misrepresentations of Native Americans in history. Pokagon's appearance at the Chicago World's Fair was "a critical, and urgent, opportunity" for American Indian intellectuals, according to Kiara Vigil.[201] Undergirding the Fair's display of American history was a social Darwinist understanding of progress that guided fairgoers through displays that "followed an evolutionary logic for displaying humanity using a scale that measured human beings according to stages from 'less' to 'more' civilized."[202] While the fair's organizers calculated Pokagon's presence at the fair as "a trophy, an authentic connection to the past, a piece of local nostalgia," signaling the close of the American frontier, Pokagon's speech and distribution of his pamphlet at the Fair questioned the American imperialism celebrated at the World's Columbian Exposition.[203] Pokagon's pamphlet was not only notable for its rhetoric but also for its rewriting of colonialist poetry by obscure white poets. With these literary borrowings, Pokagon revised the dying Indian poems that white poets used to validate American imperialism.

Scholars disagree about who benefitted from the widespread practice of reprinting in antebellum America. Meredith McGill argues that the system of reprinting gave nonwhite and women authors an advantage in the literary marketplace by bypassing the barriers of authorial

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[201] Kiara M. Vigil, *Indigenous Intellectuals: Sovereignty, Citizenship, and the American Imagination, 1880-1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid., 2.

identity and providing access to print publication. Phillip Round counters that reprinting practices allowed white publishers or editors to co-opt Indian materials and identities, thereby eroding indigenous intellectual sovereignty and taking money away from American Indian authors.[204] Pokagon's practices of borrowing verse across racial lines add another dimension to the critical issues raised in the previous chapter about poetry's relation to generic traditions over time and across cultures. By adapting colonialist white poetry into his pamphlets condemning American colonialism, I will show, Pokagon engaged with mainstream poetic traditions like the elegy for American Indians, rewriting the hegemonic cultural narrative of inevitable Indian extinction.

Although many indigenous authors invoked copyright, it failed to protect them from "cultural entrepreneurs" like Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, Elizabeth Peabody, Mary Mann, and Lyman Draper, who claimed to have "discovered" their literary works.[205] By the 1840s, United States federal policies encouraged the collection and reprinting of American Indian stories and materials in reports and surveys on indigenous peoples.[206] Impersonators like Big Chief White Horse Eagle in the early twentieth century also built careers as performers and authors around assumed Indian identities.[207] In part, these kinds of identity theft—playing Indian, to various degrees, in Philip Deloria's words—that often characterized representations of American Indians in the nineteenth century would have been difficult for an indigenous person to prosecute. Nevertheless, the theft of American Indian intellectual property also occurred because copyright

[204] Meredith McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting, 1834-1853* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 41; Phillip H. Round, *Removable Type: Histories of the Book in Indian Country, 1663-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).
[205] Ibid., 173-182.
[206] Ibid., 185.
[207] Laura Browder, *Slippery Characters: Ethnic Impersonators and American Identities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 124.

law, as is increasingly becoming clear, was not just in flux conceptually but unevenly understood and enforced across jurisdictions.

Beginning in the 1870s, however, American Indian authors reasserted their intellectual property rights by publishing "autoethnographies," such as Tuscarora author Elias Johnson's *Legends, Traditions, and Laws of the Iroquois or Six Nations and History of the Tuscarora Indians* published in Lockport, New York, in 1881.[208] Round argues that the book's material properties, as well as rhetorical features, demonstrate its "reappropriative agency" in the context of widespread appropriation of Indian cultural objects.[209] Pokagon's literary works can also be read within this context, as his generic and material choices reflect a resurgence of American Indian sovereignty over literature as intellectual property during a politically tumultuous time for American Indians in the wake of Indian removal and the Dawes Act.

This chapter concentrates on the ways that Pokagon's multi-genre, collaborative, and adaptive approach to literary production challenges restrictions on American Indian authorship. Pokagon borrowed poetry from multiple sources to adapt genres like the protest pamphlet and the temperance and romance novel to reform the United States government's relationship with American Indians. To address these questions of Pokagon's poetic adaptations, the chapter first focuses on archival loss and the reconstructive desire in relation to Pokagon's destroyed personal archive. The fire that consumed Pokagon's house rendered searching for evidence of the processes of authorship leading to his books, periodicals, articles, and speeches difficult. Yet by examining Pokagon's print archive, made possible through recent digitization efforts, scholars can view Pokagon's reading practices as part of a collaborative process of borrowing and rewriting the poetry of white settlers that calls into question nineteenth-century hierarchies of

[208] Round, *Removable Type*, 190.
[209] Ibid., 191.

genre and their relationship to media technologies like copyright. By linking media studies to genre studies, scholars reimagine the reconstructive desire and its search for a unified subject, author, and genre to understand how nineteenth-century American Indian authors practiced reading and composition in ways that were both usual and unusual for their time.

The next section of this chapter moves from this history of genres and technologies to the specific history Pokagon Band of the Potawatomi peoples, headed by Pokagon's father. Understanding the pressures of Indian removal, Leopold Pokagon allied his band with the local Catholic Parish to negotiate for them to remain in Michigan in the Treaty of Chicago. His son Simon Pokagon would take up these concerns in his own way by professing the Pokagon band's commitment to reform, especially temperance, and a Christian life in his speeches and literary works. Turning to the birchbark pamphlets Pokagon distributed during the World's Columbian Exposition reveals Pokagon's practices of intercultural borrowing and adaptation. In these pamphlets, Pokagon adapts an elegy for American Indians written by a white settler to contest the technological superiority of Americans that events like the fair assumed. Moreover, choosing to print his pamphlet on birchbark, a culturally significant substance for the Potawatomi, Pokagon deftly recaptures the tourist market for Indian souvenirs while alluding to a long history of Potawatomi literary and cultural practices.

Approaching the reprinting debate from the standpoint of Potawatomi concerns, the chapter then analyzes Pokagon's romance and temperance novel *Queen of the Woods* to question the role of copyright in American Indian authorship at the turn of the twentieth century. Analysis of reprinting in *Queen of the Woods* also highlights Pokagon's adaptation of multiple genres, particularly poetry and hymns, in his works. Through these borrowed or stolen poems and hymns, Pokagon again contests American cultural and technological supremacy by drawing

parallels between the suffering of American Indians and the suffering of people described in the Bible. In different versions and genres of the queen of the woods story, Pokagon changes the emphasis, from temperance, Indian education, and reform, to romance for the white children of Chicago to perform. Such decisions demonstrate that Pokagon was not only a master of intercultural borrowing but also of multiple genres from the pamphlet and article to the romance novel, poem, and hymn. The chapter's conclusion explores the material and intellectual legacy of Pokagon's printed and performed archive. It proposes the notion of the "object lesson," a rhetorical strategy of temperance advocates, as a way of understanding the insurgent practices of appropriation that revise and critique settler poetry in Pokagon's books and pamphlets.

Archival Loss and Reconstructive Desire: Recovering Pokagon's Collaborative Authorship and Multi-Generic Compositional Practices through Digitization

A recurring question in this chapter, and in Simon Pokagon's own writing, is how to recover an archive that has been thoroughly destroyed. This question has haunted archival theorists and literary scholars alike, who ask how to represent histories "where there is no evidence remaining—no longer a thread of continuity, a plenum of meaning or monumental history—but rather a fracture, a discontinuity, the mark of which is obliteration, erasure, and amnesia?"[210] Faced with the systemic and brutal erasures of transatlantic slavery, scholars of the African Diaspora have long asked such questions of the archive.[211] How do scholars recover, or at least come to terms with, what has been lost to time? While Pokagon's printed works address historical injustices and violence committed against Native Americans by white settlers, his

[210] Charles Merewether, "Introduction: Art and the Archive," in *The Archive*, ed. Charles Merewether (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), 12.
[211] See Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007); Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

personal archive—letters, manuscripts, and personal books—burned with his house before his death, leavings scholars with an archival gap. Apart from a few letters preserved by friends, Pokagon's personal papers are irrecoverable.

Yet this situation of archival loss is a common experience for historians and, indeed, part of the attraction of archival research in the first place. Antoinette Burton writes, "The history of the archive is a history of loss."[212]According to Paul Ricoeur, at the heart of documentary archival research is "the idea of a debt to the dead, to people of flesh and blood to whom something really happened in the past," and, without such a purpose, "history loses its meaning."[213] For Arlette Farge, archival work necessitates "a roaming voyage through the words of others" and "a voyage through the words of today, with the perhaps somewhat unreasonable conviction that we write history not just to tell it, but to anchor a departed past to our words and bring about an 'exchange among the living.'"[214] Jacques Derrida, however, criticizes this search, which he terms archival desire or archival fever (*mal d'archive*), as a quest for origins built upon a repetitive desire like that of Freud's death drive.[215] In *Dust,* Carolyn Steedman characterizes this "archive fever" as the "deeply *uncomfortable* quest for original sources that the new practice of 'scientific' history inaugurated, in the middle of the nineteenth century, and which is still the dominant idea of practice among modern, professional, Western historians."[216] In a sense,

[212] Antoinette Burton, "Thinking Beyond the Boundaries: Empire, Feminism and the Domains of History," *Social History* 26, no. 1 (2001): 60-71.
[213] Paul Ricoeur, "Archives, Documents, Traces, 1978," in *The Archive*, ed. Charles Merewether (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), 68.
[214] Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 123-124.
[215] Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
[216] Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 9-10.

Steedman argues, "the practice of history in its modern mode is just one long exercise of the deep satisfaction of *finding things*."[217]

Literary scholars, like historians, want to recover the past—to salvage it—from what Leon Trotsky called the "dustbin of history."[218] Derrida warns that this reconstructive desire is founded in a fantasy about beginnings, roots, and subjectively unified realities.[219] In other words, the reconstructive desire in literary and historical studies has authors and origins. As Native scholars like Vine Deloria, Jr. have pointed out, this reconstructive fantasy has negative repercussions when it guides the study of Native peoples, culture, histories, and literary productions. "To be an Indian in modern American society," Deloria writes at the beginning of his book *Custer Died for Your Sins*, "is in a very real sense to be unreal and ahistorical."[220] In the historical context of archives and literary professional history, the nineteenth century in the United States was a pivotal period of growth and institutional establishment for American cultural and literary history. The products of this history—the unified subject, the author, and the mapping of genres to social hierarchies—are both the end of this literary-historical quest and the means of imagining such a quest for those who have fetishized Indians for professional or literary tourism purposes. Yet the unified subject, the author, and the genre, if not illusory, have tended to keep scholars from engaging the complexity of indigenous writers like Jane Johnston Schoolcraft and Pokagon and what they have left behind.

Pokagon's authorship was collaborative in a way that goes beyond scholarly debates about whether he was sole author of his novel *Queen of the Woods*. Through reading practices

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[217] Ibid., 10.
[218] Leon Trotsky to the Mensheviks, at the Second All-Russian Congress of the Soviets, 25 October 1917, quoted in Greil Marcus, *The Dustbin of History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 4.
[219] Derrida, *Archive Fever*.
[220] Vine Deloria Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 2.

unconcerned with the inviolability of the text or author, Pokagon borrowed and rewrote the poetry of white settlers to enter a conversation termed at the time the "Indian Problem." Such composition practices were common in the United States during the nineteenth century. Also at the Chicago Columbian World's Exposition, Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, and other African American activists collectively wrote and distributed their pamphlet, *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition*.[221] Pokagon's birchbark pamphlets fit into this genre of collaboratively produced activist publications. Beyond these collective endeavors, Round argues, "*all* texts are produced in a composite way, and…*all* texts, Euro-American and Native American alike, are the products of complex networks of publishers, printers, editors, audiences, and authors."[222] Certainly, it was not just Native American authors who collaboratively produced literary works in the nineteenth century. Although the proprietary authorship system regulated allusion and citation by rules about plagiarism and intellectual property, authors often blurred the lines between literary inspiration and theft in their works.[223] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, William Gilmore Simms, Daniel G. Brinton, Franz Boas, Alice Fletcher, Mary Austin, and many others drew inspiration for their writing from American Indian legends popularized in Schoolcraft's *Algic Researches* in 1839.[224] Walt Whitman's marginalia and annotations evidence his collaborative reading and composition practices, with his notes marking certain newspaper and magazine articles for future writing projects and lectures. Like these other writers, Pokagon took advantage of the abundance of reprinted poetry and hymns in newspapers, magazines, and books to construct his own multi-generic texts. Pokagon wrote

[221] Bernd C. Peyer, *"The Thinking Indian": Native American Writers, 1850s-1920s* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 161.
[222] Round, *Removable Type*, 16.
[223] Ibid., 155.
[224] Peyer, *"The Thinking Indian"*, 157.

articles on animals and temperance, adapted poems and hymns, and his speeches were printed in newspapers and books. His novel *Queen of the Woods* partakes of many different genres, including the romance, temperance novel, and autobiography, and includes an appendix of speeches and Potawatomi crafts.

Although reprinting was a widespread practice in antebellum America, it was particularly troubling for American Indian authors. By co-opting Indian materials and stories, white publishers eroded American Indian sovereignty not only financially but by setting the terms for American Indian "authenticity," "identity," and legitimate recognition. As Round terms it, "Like Indian land, Indian books were ripe for exploitation."[225] White authors, editors, and publishers like Henry Rowe Schoolcraft established representational terms that were harmonious with western genres while making engagement with indigenous genres a sign of "bad" scholarship or unreliability. For instance, Henry Schoolcraft infantilized American Indians like his wife Jane and the Tuscarora author and artist David Cusick, seeing them as incapable of accurately representing themselves as American Indians.[226] James Fenimore Cooper and Catherine Maria Sedgwick divided American Indians into two groups: the "'fierce and dominating' Ostic, or Iroquois, and a nearly idyllic Algic, or Algonquian who is 'mild and conciliating,' full of the dreams of 'independence' at the level of 'personal or tribal freedom.'"[227] Ethnographers and linguists like Lewis Henry Morgan and Peter Stephen Duponceau valued American Indian languages for their so-called uniform grammatical structure and underlying plan of thought, termed polysynthesis.[228] Indigenous authors like William Apess responded to these

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[225] Round, *Removable Type*, 179.
[226] Scott Michaelsen, *The Limits of Multiculturalism: Interrogating the Origins of American Anthropology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 44-45.
[227] Ibid., 40.
[228] Curtis M. Hinsley Jr., *Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology 1846-1910* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981), 24.

representational demands with revisions to their texts to "temper sentimentality by portraying the 'author' of the text as an empirical reporter of the facts."[229] Simultaneously, western media and genres of recognizability evolved in response to the need to record indigenous life "accurately" as well as the imperative to maintain control over the rules of accuracy. From this perspective, the media technologies that Brian Hochman discusses in *Savage Preservation* and the copyright laws Phillip Round examines in *Removable Type* might equally be understood as "technologies" from the standpoint of the literary discipline within which indigenous North American authors had to operate.

Based on his published work, Pokagon looked at periodicals and newspapers with different eyes than those of scholars today, particularly historians of poetry. Not so much an archival journey, Pokagon's daily practice of reading was unconstrained by a respect for authorial "possession" or the inviolability of text, context, and perhaps even genre. Today this practice resembles recycled or found poetry. Recent digitization of nineteenth-century periodicals, newspapers, and books allows scholars to understand how Pokagon's multi-generic composition practices draw upon and revise reprinted poetry found in newspapers, magazines, and books. Pokagon not only borrowed this poetry; as we will see, in some cases, he rewrote it, changing pronouns and perspectives to adapt the message to his own purposes. Those purposes are best understood by considering Pokagon's background.

POTAWATOMI HISTORY AND REMOVAL BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

In 1830, the American Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, granting the president authority to negotiate all Indian land cessions within the states and territories of the United States

[229] Round, *Removable Type*, 164.

and to remove indigenous peoples to the newly created "Indian Territory" west of the Mississippi River. Although most remember this removal as occurring in what is today the Southeastern United States, removal happened throughout the heartland both before and after the Indian Removal Act of 1830.[230] In 1838, Indiana Governor David Wallace ordered the removal of the state's remaining Potawatomi population to the West. At Menominee's village near Twin Lakes, Indiana's militia kidnapped the Potawatomi leaders and trapped the Potawatomi people in the village chapel. They gave the Potawatomi no time to gather personal belongings or prepare for their removal to the west in a few days. On September 4, 1838, the Menominee band of Potawatomi was marched from their homeland in northern Indiana to a small reserve in present-day Kansas in a journey called the Trail of Death. Behind them, the Indiana militia burned the Potawatomi's fields and houses ensuring that no one would try to return.[231] Indigenous peoples' responses to sometimes voluntary, sometimes coerced emigration in the Great Lakes were various, and included hiding, forming smaller groups, and negotiating exemption from removal or moving to safer regions.[232]

The Potawatomi had first encountered Christian missionaries with the arrival of the Jesuits in 1634. The missionaries' arrival was foretold by a prophet who visited the Neshnabek and warned them, "in the time of the Fifth Fire individuals would come who assured glory and salvation if the people would accept the newcomers' ways and abandon the teachings of their ancestors." The prophet told them that if the people accepted these teachings and abandoned their traditions, the Fifth Fire would scorch their people for many generations, because the

[230] John N. Low, *Imprints: The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and the City of Chicago* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2016), 6, 25.
[231] Kelli Jean Mosteller, "Place, Politics, and Property: Negotiating Allotment for the Citizen Potawatomi, 1861-1891" (dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2013), 15-16.
[232] Low, *Imprints*, 6.

missionaries' promises were false.[233] Some Potawatomi villages converted to Christianity; others did not. Nevertheless, the "majority of Potawatomi who converted to Christianity seemed to heed the warnings about the Fifth Fire by adopting the primary tenants [sic] of the faith and blending it with traditional Potawatomi spiritual practices."[234] Catholic missions dominated the present-day Chicago and Detroit region by the early nineteenth century, with dozens of Catholic missions in the Great Lakes region. Missionaries often played important roles in Potawatomi treaty negotiations, some favoring removal and others supporting their village's desire to remain in their homelands. Simon Pokagon's father, Leopold Pokagon, leveraged his village's conversion and relationship with the local Catholic parish to negotiate with the federal government to remain in the Great Lakes area. Pokagon could make this alliance with the local Catholic parish for his band because Potawatomi government largely operated at the village level.[235]

Potawatomi, or Bodewadmi, were part of a large group of Algonquian-speaking peoples collectively known as the "Neshnabek" who migrated inland from the East Coast of North America to settle throughout the Great Lakes before the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas. This Neshnabek alliance was called the Three Fires Council or Confederacy and included the Odawa and Ojibwe. Within this confederacy, the Potawatomi were called the Bodéwadmi or "Keepers of the Fire" and were considered the "youngest brother" in the Confederacy.[236] After separating from the Ojibwe and Odawa people, the Potawatomi established villages around the Great Lakes region from what is now Green Bay, Wisconsin,

[233] Mosteller, "Place, Politics, and Property," 26.
[234] Ibid.
[235] Ibid., 26-28.
[236] Low, *Imprints*, 12. The story of how this confederacy formed can be found, as told in the Potawatomi tradition, in *Wisconsin Indian Literature: Anthology of Native Voices*, ed. Kathleen Tigerman (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 173-176; Mosteller, "Place, Politics, and Property," 18.

south around Lake Michigan to Detroit, and into Ohio.[237] Within this Potawatomi territory, Chicago was an intertribal space, routinely used for trade and social interaction.[238] Like other tribal nations in the Great Lakes area, the Potawatomi formed marriage alliances with French and British traders. As the region increasingly came under American control, the Potawatomi who intermarried with traders were given special status as "chiefs" by the American government and moved into villages with British and French traders.[239]

The Potawatomi farmed in the southern Great Lakes region, drying and storing their food in buried birch bark containers over winter and adding seasonal variety through foraging. Like the Ojibwe, the Potawatomi also gathered wild rice and made maple syrup. The Potawatomi also used birch tree bark to cover their wigwams and build canoes, which allowed them to travel and trade.[240] Potawatomi societies were bound together through "ties of kinship, custom, and mutual necessity." They built small, scattered villages of about one to two hundred people headed by a civil chief who led by consensus and village-approved councils with war chiefs appointed only as necessary.[241] In the spring and summer when food was more abundant, several villages or bands within a region often merged to conduct ceremonies and seasonal events like maple syrup tapping, berry festivals, and rites of passage.[242] The Potawatomi divided their communities into exogamous clans, like the bear, turtle, or sturgeon, although they often lived in intertribal communities.[243] Time was measured by seasonal labors, with farm work during the spring and summer, harvesting, hunting, and gathering during the fall, with fishing year-round. Summer was

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[237] Low, *Imprints*, 12.
[238] Ibid.
[239] Jacqueline Peterson, "The Founding Fathers: The Absorption of French-Indian Chicago 1816-1837," in *Native Chicago*, ed. Terry Straus (Chicago: Albatross Press, 2002), 35-36.
[240] Low, *Imprints*, 14-15.
[241] Mosteller, "Place, Politics, and Property," 20-21; Low, *Imprints*, 16.
[242] Mosteller, "Place, Politics, and Property," 20-21.
[243] Low, *Imprints*, 16-18.

a time for socializing among different communities, while during the winter, Potawatomi peoples created and repaired objects and told stories.[244]

As with the Ojibwe, the changing fur trade affected the Potawatomi, resulting in overhunting and over-trapping and, consequently, conflicts over territory and trade. Although the fur trade initially led to intermarriage and cooperation between Europeans and the Potawatomi, competition for scarcer resources led to intertribal warfare, especially with the powerful Iroquois Confederacy, and temporarily forced the Potawatomi out of their traditional homelands. This early conflict would become a pattern, with the Potawatomi drawn into imperial conflicts between the French, British, and, eventually, Americans. After the French lost the French and Indian War, Britain emphasized trade profits, encouraging overhunting and trapping and indigenous dependence on trade goods, particularly alcohol.[245] Soon, however, the Potawatomi had more worries. After winning the Revolutionary War, the United States Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance in 1787, establishing a "framework for United States expansion" into the Great Lakes region.[246] As the fur trade ended, the American government and settlers pressured the Potawatomi and other indigenous nations to sell their land, and the situation began to look dire as the Potawatomi felt the combined forces of disease, alcohol, non-Native technology, and increased immigration to the area from the 1825 completion of the Erie Canal.[247] After the War of 1812, land speculation became a serious problem for American Indians as the bankrupt United States government set a pattern of buying cheap land from American Indians, removing them west, and then selling the land to speculators at huge profits.[248]

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[244] Ibid.; Mosteller, "Place, Politics, and Property," 20.
[245] Low, *Imprints*, Ibid., 18-19.
[246] Ibid., 20.
[247] Ibid., 22-23.
[248] Ibid., 25.

The Potawatomi signed over thirty land cession treaties with the United States between 1816 and 1833, when the United States government gathered leaders from all the Potawatomi tribes of the Great Lakes area to negotiate the Treaty of Chicago. By 1833, Chief Justice John Marshall's ruling on three cases had changed the concept of American Indian sovereignty in significant ways. In these cases, Marshall declared that American Indians were "domestic dependent nations" and wards of the federal government, although with "significant residual sovereignty."[249] In addition to land speculation and increased immigration, recent wars in the Chicago area between indigenous people and settlers like the 1827 HoChunk Resistance and Black Hawk's War in 1832 created consensus among settlers that American Indians must be removed from the Great Lakes area.[250]

Leopold Pokagon attended the negotiation of the Treaty of Chicago in 1833, and his actions would change the course of history for his community, the soon-to-be-named Pokagon Band of Potawatomi. At the Chicago negotiations, Pokagon emphasized his band's temperance and Catholicism, which enabled him to negotiate an amendment to the Treaty of Chicago allowing his band to stay in Michigan on 874 acres of land in Cass County purchased by the sale of his own land. Thus, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi remained in the Great Lakes area while the federal government removed the rest of the Potawatomi west of the Mississippi River in accordance with the Indian Removal Act.[251] Pokagon cemented this alliance with the Catholic Church through baptism by the vicar general of the Detroit Diocese and a request that the federal government provide their band with a priest, which was granted. By embracing Catholicism, the

[249] John Low and Paula Holley, "Treaty of Chicago—September, 1833," in *Native Chicago*, ed. Terry Straus (Chicago: Albatross Press, 2002), 97.
[250] Ibid., 100-101.
[251] Low, *Imprints*, 29.

Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians differentiated themselves as a group from the rest of the Potawatomi under the visionary leadership of Leopold Pokagon.[252]

Leopold Pokagon's alliance with the Catholic Church did not, however, prevent later government attempts to remove the Pokagon Band. With the help of a Michigan Supreme Court Justice, Pokagon fought against military attempts to remove the Band. Upon his death in 1841, disputes emerged over land ownership that sharply divided the tribal nation, causing many Potawatomi to move elsewhere. Following this conflict among the Pokagon heirs, the tribal nation, and the Catholic Church, the Pokagon Band focused on obtaining the annuity payments and other promises made by the United States government in their many treaties with the Potawatomi.[253] Securing these treaty promises became the special cause of Leopold Pokagon's youngest son, Simon, who wrote articles, pamphlets, a novel, and speeches to this purpose.[254]

Stolen Poetry in Simon Pokagon's Birchbark Pamphlets

Potawatomi scholar and enrolled member of the Pokagon Band John Low explains, "The Potawatomi say, 'We walk on the bones of our ancestors' to solemnize our connections to the ones who came before us, as well as to demonstrate our intimate connection to the land."[255] Simon Pokagon constructed his first book from white birch bark, a culturally significant material from the Potawatomi's ancestral lands. Through the material and contents of this birch bark pamphlet, "The Red Man's Rebuke," Pokagon expresses his disgust that the Chicago World's Columbian Fair celebrates American imperialism on sacred Potawatomi ancestral land stolen

[252] Ibid., 31.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid., 31-32.
[255] Ibid., 2.

mere decades before.[256] American Indians, Pokagon asserts in the birch-bark book, "have no spirit to celebrate with you the great Columbian Fair…No; sooner would we hold high joy-day over the graves of our departed fathers, than to celebrate our own funeral, the discovery of America."[257]

Chicago grew from a fur trading outpost to "a bustling metropolis of more than a million people in the nineteenth century, first as a lake and river port city, and then as a railroad center."[258] Moreover, Chicago was built from wood that came from indigenous lands along Lake Michigan dispossessed in treaties during the 1820s and 1830s. By the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago was a railroad center known for its stockyards and slaughterhouses.[259] The Fair organizers aimed to prove that Chicago could also be "a world-class center of commerce and culture."[260] The fair took place in the midst of a "severe economic recession," that in Chicago had manifested in "abject poverty, chronic labor strife, a high crime rate, and a repressive and corrupt city government."[261] In contrast to these economic conditions, progress was on display everywhere at the Fair, from the Neo-Classical and Renaissance buildings of the "White City" in Jackson Park to the technological and scientific displays which "manifested in the assumed triumph of civilization in the North American continent."[262] Indigenous peoples, including American Indians, were also part of this progress narrative, depicted as vanishing "species" destined for extinction or assimilation and valued for their "historical, educational, and

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[256] Pokagon later renamed his birchbark pamphlet, "The Red Man's Greeting" without making any other changes to the text. In addition to Pokagon, various Potawatomi people tried to regain title or compensation for their land in Chicago, including one of Pokagon's sons.
[257] Simon Pokagon, "The Red Man's Rebuke" (Hartford: C.H. Engle, 1893), 1
[258] Rosalyn R. Lapier and David R.M. Beck, *City Indian: Native American Activism in Chicago, 1893-1934* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 6, 7.
[259] Ibid., 8.
[260] Raymond Fogelson, "The Red Man in the White City," in *Native Chicago*, ed. Terry Straus (Chicago: Albatross Press, 2002), 137.
[261] Ibid.
[262] Ibid., 140.

scientific value."[263] The office guidebook to the World's Fair notes that in the Anthropological Building, "Americans have an opportunity of learning more of the early history of their own country than ever before, and the comparison between aboriginal customs and modern civilization is strikingly illustrated."[264] In the Ethnology Section, visitors gawked at "the native Indians, with canoes, fishing, and hunting tackle, costumes and all the appurtenances of Indian life." The guidebook enthuses, "They cook, make trinkets, perform their songs and dances, and go through the ordinary routine of life in their tribes." Like Pokagon, these Native Americans sold crafts and photographs of themselves as souvenirs to visitors.[265] Pokagon's pamphlet, "The Red Man's Rebuke" was also displayed at the Fair in the Michigan Building, where it was framed within this progress narrative as written by "the last chief of the Potawatomies."[266] The Fair's guidebook poses these American Indian exhibitions explicitly as a "back ground to the Exposition, bringing out by comparison with greater force the advances made during the past four centuries, as shown in the great buildings devoted to the material and educational interests of man."[267]

In practice, however, Pokagon's pamphlet took a much more active role at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition than its display in the Michigan Building as the work of a supposedly vanishing American Indian suggests. In "The Red Man's Rebuke," Pokagon borrows, rewrites, and reframes a poem by the white settler poet Charles Sprague. Pokagon switches the speaker's perspective in the poem from a white settler to that of an indigenous person, thereby disrupting the sense of inevitable progress leading to the vanishing of American

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[263] Ibid.
[264] *Official Guide to the World's Columbian Exposition in the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, May 1 to October 26, 1893*, ed. John J. Flinn (Chicago: The Columbian Guide Company, 1893), 53.
[265] Ibid., 54-55.
[266] Fogelson, "Red Man in the White City," 147.
[267] *Official Guide*, 55.

Indians on display at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition. Sprague's poem had been rewritten, reprinted, and adapted many times, including by leading authors like Lydia Sigourney. Pokagon's rearrangement stands out from these examples because it disrupts the poem's temporality and its related characterization of American Indians as premodern.

Charles Sprague was born on October 26, 1791 in Boston, and spent his life in New England until his death on January 22, 1875. His father's family settled in Hingham in 1636, and his mother was descended from Peregrine White, the first baby boy born on the Mayflower, of Plymouth Colony fame. Sprague was apprenticed to a counting house and entered business as a grocer before working at a series of banks in Boston. In his free time, he educated himself in English literature, preferring poetry. Newspapers published his poems, and in 1821 he won a prize from the Park Theatre in New York for his prologue. He went on to receive several other prizes for his verse, which he performed at theatre openings and celebrations. In 1830, Sprague wrote an ode for Boston's bicentennial.[268]

Sprague's poem was printed in a pamphlet, titled *Ode: Pronounced before the Inhabitants of Boston, September the Seventeenth, 1830, at the Centennial Celebration of the Settlement of the City* and published in Boston in 1830. The poem highlights issues of archival loss with respect to American Indians, but a more sinister form of preservation emerges as well: erasure and remembrance. Sprague beseeches: "Shall not one line lament that lion race, / For us struck out from sweet creation's face?"[269] Sprague's wording positions American Indian death as loss, a tragedy that presents an opportunity for white settlers to lament through poetry. Pokagon's revision of the poem, in contrast, reveals this memorial gesture as one of erasure: "Shall not one

[268] Edmund Quincy, *Memoir of Charles Sprague, Prepared for the Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (Boston: John Wilson and Son, 1875).
[269] Charles Sprague, *Ode: Pronounced before the Inhabitants of Boston, September the Seventeenth, 1830, at the Centennial Celebration of the Settlement of the City* (Boston: John H. Eastburn, 1830), 10.

line lament our forest race, / For you struck out from wild creation's face?"[270] By shifting the perspective from a white settler to that of an indigenous person, Pokagon contests poetic forms like the elegy that allow white settlers to mourn the collective deaths of American Indians while ignoring or even hastening the demise of living American Indians. Pokagon emphasizes this hypocrisy throughout the poem, revealing that acts of poetic memorial benefit white settlers, not American Indians. Where Sprague asks Bostonians to spare a thought or perhaps a poem for the Native Americans who defended their homes from the settlers' ancestors, Pokagon's change in perspective contests the presumption that Native Americans are dead or premodern and soon-to-be dead. Erasure and remembrance allow Americans to claim indigenous identity for themselves by "playing Indian," in Philip Deloria's words, but only by assuming an evolutionary idea of progress that accounts for American Indians as premodern and fated to extinction.[271]

Pokagon's revision of Sprague's poem contests this idea that American Indians are premodern and doomed to extinction in order to argue against Indian removal. During the time that Sprague's poem was published in 1830, Boston philanthropists had lost the fight against Indian removal with Andrew Jackson's election in 1829. Jackson's signing of the Indian Removal Act described above began the process of western relocation for many tribal nations in the United States. In his adaptation of Sprague's poem, Pokagon changes from "hill to shore," which describes the Boston landscape, to "shore to shore," which suits the Great Lakes as well as the narrative of Manifest Destiny celebrated at the Chicago Columbian Fair.[272] Pokagon acknowledges with this citation that Sprague's elegy for supposedly disappearing Indians, like Longfellow's *Hiawatha* after it, is a powerful cultural narrative of Manifest Destiny. Yet it is not

[270] Pokagon, "The Red Man's Rebuke," 1.
[271] Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).
[272] Pokagon, "The Red Man's Rebuke," 1; Sprague, *Ode*, 14.

the narrative of Pokagon's own tribal nation, which negotiated with the United States for private land in Michigan rather than moving to Indian Territory.

Having harnessed the concept of Manifest Destiny, Sprague's poem engages in a fantasy that American Indians are not only premodern but also have left no trace. This idea erases the presence—past and present—of American Indian authors and leaves the literary field open for white settler poetry. Sprague bemoans that Native Americans are "doubly lost!" since "oblivion's shadows close / Around their triumphs and their woes… / But the doomed Indian leaves behind no trace, / To save his own, or serve another race."[273] What Sprague performs here is a version of what Jean M. O'Brien calls "firsting and lasting," in which settler histories replace indigenous ones to render colonists the new indigenes.[274] But in this, case the poem specifically links archival practice and technology with poetic "salvage" and white subjectivity. Sprague goes on to list the literary traces American Indians supposedly did not leave: "Nor lofty pile, nor glowing page / Shall link him to a future age, / Or give him with the past a rank: / His heraldry is but a broken bow, / His history but a tale of wrong and wo, / His very name must be a blank."[275] Sprague's poem takes a narrow view of archival records and technology, imagining that historical records must be written in order to communicate the past effectively, overlooking other forms of media such as oral history, rock paintings, religion, and descendants as means of communicating the past to the present.

This narrow view of technology and archives appealed to settler poets like Sprague not least because it allowed them to insist on their own literary importance. Western ideas of history and genre allow Sprague to claim: "Even that he lived, is for his conqueror's tongue, / By foes

[273] Ibid., 15.
[274] Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).
[275] Sprague, *Ode*, 15.

alone his death-song must be sung; / No chronicles but theirs shall tell / His mournful doom to future times; / May these upon his virtues dwell, / And in his fate forget his crimes."[276] Even before anthropologists were "salvaging" American Indian stories and cultural materials, white settler poets were performing their own kind of poetic "salvage." To reassert the importance of American poetry, American poets reminded readers of the need to record early American history. In effect, these white settler poets were salvaging poetry by claiming that American Indian history was unsalvageable. Early American ethnologists like Samuel G. Morton and Henry Rowe Schoolcraft were especially fond of poetry and history. When Morton attended medical school at the University of Edinburgh, he studied classical and modern languages in addition to medicine.[277] What remained of American Indian history, ethnologists and poets alike argued, was a deeply felt reconstructive desire in relation to America's past that only poetry could answer. Through such poetry American poets like Sprague could declare: "All gone! 'tis ours, the goodly land— / Look round—the heritage behold."[278]

Pokagon's strategy for appropriating colonial discourses is both rhetorical and material. He uses what was for the Potawatomi a medium, birch bark, to contest the position that American Indians were premodern and lacked forms of literacy, culture, and communication before contact with European settlers. Birch bark was a preferred medium for Pokagon, as several of his other works also were published as birch-bark booklets. These booklets or pamphlets were "Small enough to fit in an open hand…printed on both sides of thin birch-bark pages and bound together with ribbon."[279] One scholar has remarked that the grain of the birch

[276] Ibid., 16.
[277] Robert E. Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian, 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 56-57.
[278] Sprague, *Ode*, 17.
[279] Jonathan Berliner, "Written in the Birch Bark: The Linguistic-Material Worldmaking of Simon Pokagon," *PMLA* 125, no. 1 (2010): 73.

bark creates a "three-dimensional" effect, "as though the words were emanating from within the bark."[280] These material choices made Pokagon's birch bark pamphlets marketable as a souvenir. In the late nineteenth century, Americans associated birch bark materials with American Indian souvenirs sold at tourist attractions like Niagara Falls. American naturalists like Ernest Thompson Seton, one of the founders of the Boy Scouts, took advantage of this association, titling his instruction manual for scouting troops *Birch-Bark Roll*.[281]

While appealing to white tourists, Pokagon's pamphlets also alluded to Central Algonquian birch-bark writing practices like sacred scrolls used by the Anishinaabeg, a group closely related to the Potawatomi. Birch bark was used by many Algonquian peoples to cover wigwams (the Anishinaabemowin term for birch bark, *wiigwaas*, hints at this use) and build canoes, as it is lightweight, waterproof, retains heat and resists wind.[282] Birch bark was also used among the Anishinaabeg for cooking vessels and decoration, with patterns inscribed or bitten into the bark.[283] The Anishinaabeg also use birch bark mnemonic scrolls as "memory aids," inscribing "humanoid or animal-like" figures onto them.[284] To understand the scroll's message, a reader must be instructed in its codes and each figure labeled or translated by the owner or maker of the scroll, though many symbols are generalized for common use.[285] Midé priests pass down information to the next generation through a tutelary system, and when new scrolls wear out with use, the priests make a new scroll to replace it. They assert that this new scroll is still "hundreds of years old," since the priests refer to "its contents, not the bark." Both worn out scrolls and

[280] Ibid.
[281] Ibid., 79.
[282] Ibid., 87; Ruth Landes, *Ojibwa Religion and the Midéwiwin* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 223.
[283] Ibid., 224.
[284] Fred K. Blessing, "Birchbark Made Scrolls from Minnesota," *The Minnesota Archaeologist* 25, no. 3 (1963): 93; Landes, *Ojibwa Religion*, 224.
[285] Ibid.; Blessing, "Birchbark Made Scrolls," 94.

scrolls without a proper inheritor are burned or buried.[286] Birch bark scrolls are thought to possess spiritual power, so proper treatment is important; disrespect could bring disaster upon the responsible individual.[287]

Pokagon explicitly outlines the Potawatomi significance of birch bark in his author's note at the beginning of "Red Man's Rebuke." "My object in publishing 'The Red Man's Rebuke' on the bark of the white birch tree," he writes, "is out of loyalty to my own people, and gratitude to the Great Spirit, who in his wisdom provided for our use for untold generations, this most remarkable tree with manifold bark used by us instead of paper, being of greater value to us as it could not be injured by sun or water."[288] Pokagon enumerates the uses of birch bark to the Potawatomi: "Out of the bark of this wonderful tree were made hats, caps and dishes for domestic use, while our maidens tied with it the knot that sealed their marriage vow; wigwams were made of it, as well as large canoes that outrode the violent storms on lake and sea; it was also used for light and fuel at our war councils and spirit dances."[289] However, Pokagon notes, "like the red man this tree is vanishing from our forests."[290] This remark leads into his adaptation of the Sprague poem, changed from the Boston centennial to the new circumstances of the Columbian Exposition. The juxtaposition of past and present circumstances of the Potawatomi people and American Indians is heightened by the illustration on the next page, "Chicago in my Grandfather's Days.—By Chief Pokagon." The picture depicts a lake in which American Indians canoe in boats made of birchbark, leading into a river surrounded by teepees. The appendix of Pokagon's *Queen of the Woods* also includes an extract from Pokagon's articles, titled "Indian

[286] Ibid., 100, 107.
[287] Ibid., 139.
[288] Simon Pokagon, "By The Author," in "The Red Man's Rebuke" (Hartford: C.H. Engle, 1893).
[289] Ibid.
[290] Ibid.

Skill in Splint and Bark Work," featuring two halftones of splint work and quill embroidery on white birch bark.

The typical cover material in nineteenth-century America was English book cloth.[291] But Pokagon's choice of birchbark was in keeping with a trend in the second half of the nineteenth century of experimentation with making books from "such heterogeneous materials as cane, reed, various straws, grass, plantain, stalks of the hop plant, ferns, thistles, horseradish, bleached remnants of manure, peat, bark, refuse leather scrappings, beet roots, ivory shavings, corn cobs, bamboo, fishes, and even the wrappings of Egyptian mummies."[292] In the 1890s, a group of small publishing houses followed the models of London publishers Elkin Mathews and John Lane in aiming "to publish only works of literary quality and to bring out their selections in an attractive and distinctive format."[293] These publishers emphasized the "fresh charm of the personal and the individual" in their literary selections and book construction.[294] Pokagon's choice to print "The Red Man's Rebuke" on birchbark can thus also be understood within this context of the literary and bookmaking choices of the small publishing houses in the 1890s. Whether associated with American Indian tourism crafts or the carefully crafted books of small publishing houses in the 1890s, what remains is a deliberate and conscious attention to book materials and the pleasure contemporary readers derived from them.

Contemporary reviews lauded "The Red Man's Greeting" as a wise purchase for book collectors and Indianologists alike, and Pokagon's publisher C.H. Engle carefully included these reviews in the appendix to Pokagon's novel *Queen of the Woods*. The *New York Globe* advises:

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[291] Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *The Book in America: A History of the Making and Selling of Books in the United States* (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1952), 148.
[292] Ibid., 166.
[293] Ibid., 323.
[294] Ibid.

> This book will take its place in the cabinets of admirers of handsome books along with the carved leather bindings and illuminated text of the early German publishers; the heavy oaken-covered books of the first English works; the minute rice paper books of India; the stone tablets of the Phenicians [sic], and the parchments of the Greeks, as the representative work of the nationality to which the author belonged.[295]

The *Salem Herald-Advocate* calls the booklet "a revelation of the Indians' poetry of thought" and "a literary gem well worth the having."[296] The *Globe* elaborates, "It abounds in all the rich metaphor and eloquence of the aboriginal race."[297] The *Detroit Sunday News* similarly imagines of the pamphlet, "There is a bit of nature about it that seems to breathe the very air of some chieftain's home in the forest," while the Chicago *Inter Ocean* lauds the "pathos of this tiny book" as "a cry of anguish from the red man's heart."[298] Hattie Flower, of Boston, writes for the *Arena* magazine in November of 1893, "This tiny booklet, called forth by our Columbian anniversary, is seasonable, and, in its rusticity, characteristic of a child of the forest."[299] Flower concludes, "The aborigines have ever been notable for their inborn poetic and oratorical powers. A bit of literature so clearly indicative of this phase of their nature is worthy of careful preservation."[300] After these advertisements for the pamphlet, Engle directs "Anyone desiring a copy of this relic of the woods" to send him fifty cents.[301] These reviews and advertisements demonstrate the appeal of Pokagon's pamphlet to late-nineteenth-century consumers not simply as a literary work but as a kind of artifact of Native American literacy, or, as Engle calls it a "relic." Such reviews attracted public attention and induced preservation of the pamphlet, thus going against the logic of disappearing Indian records and the colonial "firsting and lasting" of

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[295] Simon Pokagon, *O-Gî-Mäw-Kwe Mit-I-Gwä-Kî (Queen of the Woods)* (Hartford: C.H. Engle, 1899), 251
[296] Ibid.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Ibid.
[299] Ibid., 252.
[300] Ibid.
[301] Ibid., 253.

Sprague's poem. Nevertheless, many contemporary reviewers also overlooked the Potawatomi meanings of the birchbark medium and re-inscribed Pokagon's pamphlet within the salvage collecting paradigm of Indian relics.

Although the reception of "The Red Man's Rebuke" focuses on its materiality, its value as a relic and American Indian product, Pokagon emphasizes a different kind of value in the pamphlet's text. For American Indians, the price of American colonialism and the "progress" displayed at the Chicago World's Columbian Fair has been exorbitant. Contemplating the grand buildings of the World's Columbian Exposition, he writes, "do not forget that this success has been at the sacrifice of *our* homes and a once happy race."[302] Reminding his readers of the illustration on the preceding page, Pokagon declares, "Where these great Columbian show-building stretch skyward, and where stands this 'Queen City of the West,' *once* stood the red man's wigwam; here met their old men, young men, and maidens; here blazed their council-fires. But now the eagle's eye can find no trace of them."[303] To this idyllic scene came the Europeans, not from technological prowess but by "chance":

> But alas! the pale-faces came by chance to our shores, many times very needy and hungry. We nursed and fed them,—fed the ravens that were soon to pluck out our eyes, and the eyes of our children; for no sooner had the news reached the Old World that a new continent had been found, peopled with another race of men, than, locust-like, they swarmed on all our coasts; and, like the carrion crows in spring, that in circles wheel and clamor long and loud, and will not cease until they find and feast upon the dead, so these strangers from the East long circuits made, and turkey-like they gobbled in our ears, 'Give us gold, give us gold;' 'Where find you gold? Where find you gold?'[304]

With this passage, Pokagon revises the colonial history being told through celebrations like the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition.

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[302] Simon Pokagon, "The Red Man's Rebuke" (Hartford: C.H. Engle, 1893), 2.
[303] Ibid.
[304] Ibid., 2-3.

First, Pokagon rejects the notion, made implicit and explicit through the technological exhibits at such fairs, that Europeans found the Americas through their technological prowess. Pokagon instead positions Columbus's heroic New World discovery as happening by chance rather than design. Second, Pokagon emphasizes that American Indians first took pity on and helped settlers who were "many times very needy and hungry." American Indians would come to regret this decision, Pokagon argues, comparing the settlers to ravens and driving the point home by comparing the settlers to locusts who "swarmed" the coasts, alluding to the plagues of locusts in the Bible that ate Egypt's crops as punishment for keeping the Israelites enslaved. Pokagon then shifts to another animal metaphor, describing the settlers as carrion crows in spring who circle the land until they find the dead to feast upon. He ends with the particularly American metaphor of the turkey, characterizing the hungry settlers as "gobbl[ing] in our ears" for gold as they moved westward from the East Coast. These metaphors emphasize the material greed underlying westward expansion while painting a comical image of hungry settlers gobbling their way across North America.

In addition to selling pamphlets, Pokagon was a vocal participant at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, again adapting verse to his own purposes in his speeches. In one such speech, Pokagon thanks Chicago for including him among the "educated people of my race" and contrasts his appearance with the "war-whoops and battle-dances" witnessed on the Midway Plaisance, which stereotype Native Americans as "savages."[305] Pokagon directs his audience to look not to the past, "over the bloody trails we have trod in other days," but to the present, where, "above the roar and crash of the cyclone of civilization are heard many voices demanding that to the red man justice *must* be done."[306] Looking toward the future, Pokagon asks the crowd

[305] Pokagon, *Queen of the Woods*, 12-13.
[306] Ibid., 20.

to pray with him to the "Great Spirit" to teach Americans that Native Americans "are human as well as they" and "teach them to know that—Within the recess of the native's soul, / There is a secret place, which God doth hold; / And though the storms of life do war around, / Yet still within, his image fixed is found.'"[307]

Pokagon borrows and adapts this poetic quotation from Washington A. Engle's *La Pold and Euridice: A Poem in Twenty-Two Books or Cantos Embracing Many Common and Tragic Scenes of Life*, where it appears in the context of a traditional love poem written in the first person to the beloved.[308] Pokagon again changes the poem's perspective to demonstrate indigenous peoples' love for God, emphasizing both the Catholicism of his own band and the willingness of American Indians to convert to Christianity and assimilate into settler society. "I now realize that the hand of the Great Spirit is open in our behalf," Pokagon concludes; "already he has thrown his great search-light upon the vault of heaven, and Christian men and women are reading them in characters of fire well understood, 'The red man is your brother, and God is the Father of all.'"[309] The image of God projecting a search light by which Christians read "in characters of fire" the proclamation of universal brotherhood and Christianity foregrounds Pokagon's command of a different kind of literacy, one which made him intelligible to contemporary Americans: Christianity and its associated reform movements.

[307] Ibid., 22.
[308] Washington A. Engle, *La Pold and Euridice: A Poem in Twenty-Two Books or Cantos Embracing Many Common and Tragic Scenes of Life* (Hartford: Michigan, 1893), 85.
[309] Pokagon, *Queen of the Woods*, 23.

COPYRIGHT AND POETIC EXCERPTS IN *QUEEN OF THE WOODS*, A POTAWATOMI ROMANCE AND TEMPERANCE NOVEL

Pokagon died shortly before the publication of his romance and temperance novel *Queen of the Woods*. Pokagon's lawyer, friend, and publisher, C.H. Engle, issued the novel in 1899 in Hartford, Michigan. According to Engle, the romance was "nearly in type when the author suddenly died," and Pokagon's death caused further delay as the editor decided to include an appendix at the request of Pokagon's friends.[310] These circumstances mean that as a book, *Queen of the Woods* was posthumously constructed, making it difficult to separate Pokagon's authorship from Engle's voluminous editorial notes. In addition to the romance or temperance novel, *Queen of the Woods* includes publisher's notes on Pokagon's life, a treatise on the Algonquin language, and a multi-genre appendix containing speeches, excerpts from articles, tributes, and obituaries, ending with a chapter on Potawatomi splint and birchbark crafts. This appendix also notably includes Engle's instructions for ordering Pokagon's other works and brings up the question of copyright ownership.

C.H. Engle is listed as the copyright applicant for *Queen of the Woods* in the 1899 *Catalogue of Title Entries of Books and other Articles Entered in the Office of the Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress*. Although the entry lists the author as Simon Pokagon, it specifies that the copyright is by C.H. Engle, who deposited the copies on May 13, 1899, a few months after Pokagon's death.[311] Engle continued to publish Pokagon's books posthumously after the first edition of *Queen of the Woods* in 1899. By 1901, *Queen of the Woods* had gone through three editions, and Engle had also published *The Pottawatamie Book of Genesis*—

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[310] Ibid.

[311] *Catalogue of Title Entries of Books and other Articles Entered in the Office of the Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress, at Washington, D.C., under the Copyright Law, Wherein the Copyright has been Completed by the Deposit of Two Copies. Vol. 19* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1899), 832.

Legends of the Creation of Man. Another copyright clue appears with the reprinting of *Queen of the Woods* in the 1907 publication by the Reformed Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Lamoni, Iowa, of *Object-Lessons on Temperance or The Indian Maiden and Her White Deer* by an author identified by the single name Frances. In this book's introduction, Frances writes, "To the publisher of Chief Pokagon's book, 'Queen of the Woods,' with the full and free consent of his heirs, we are under obligations for the privilege allowed us in making lengthy quotations from the same."[312] This credit reveals that Engle and his heirs were the benefactors of the copyright to *Queen of the Woods*, not Pokagon's family or tribe. In 1904, Engle also prepared a dramatic version of "Queen of the Woods" for performance at Hartford, Michigan. An article in *The Indian's Friend* writes, "The costumes and head dresses are striking and beautiful and the Indian music is a prominent feature of the play." The paper adds, "The text is being copyrighted and the play will be available probably by autumn for this country and for England."[313] According to the United States copyright records, Engle applied for copyright of the play as "Queen of the woods. Indian drama. 56 pp., 2 parts" on July 28, 1904, with no mention of Pokagon.[314]

In addition to the legal issue of copyright, throughout the book, subtle distinctions and convergences emerge that suggest the authorial complexity of different chapters. The title of the chapter on indigenous language is "The Algonquin Language. By the Author," indicating Pokagon. Pokagon explains in the first person his decision to write the novel using an indigenous language:

> I realize that many of its readers will inquire why so many Indian words are used. All such will please bear in mind that the manuscript was first written in the Algonquin

[312] Frances, *Object-Lessons on Temperance or The Indian Maiden and Her White Deer* (Lamoni, Iowa: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1907), vii.
[313] *The Indian's Friend* 16 (July 1904), 5.
[314] *Catalog of Title Entries Third Quarter 1904* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1904), 894, IV, 922.

> language, the only language spoken by me until fourteen years of age, and that in translating it into English, many parts seem to lose their force and euphony, insomuch that I deeply regret that 'Queen of the Woods' can not be read by the white people in my own language.[315]

The end of the chapter, however, switches to the third person to assert the importance of indigenous language. "It has been said that Greek is the language of the gods," it reads, "that Latin is the language of heroes, and that French is the language of lovers and novelists; and Pokagon might consistently add that the Algaic [Algic] language is the three in one, symmetrically interwoven in nature's great loom."[316] At moments like this, the line between Pokagon the author and Engle the publisher becomes blurred. This chapter's ending note, with its image of a culture created, woven, in "nature's great loom," and association of different languages with different literary genres sounds like a finishing flourish by Engle and stands in contrast to the earlier first person pronouns. Yet the assertion that the Algic language combines the best genres of other languages and cultures and weaves them together also speaks to an indigenous history of literature through arts and crafts much like the Potawatomi history with birch bark that Pokagon had highlighted in his pamphlets.[317]

These potentially collaborative language observations end with a quotation adapted from George Herbert's poem "The Sonne." Although this poem was widely used in nineteenth-century articles debating language differences, Pokagon and Engle most likely borrowed an adaptation of it found as an epigraph to the 1878 edition of Bishop Baraga's *A Dictionary of the Otchipwe*

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[315] Pokagon, *Queen of the Woods*, 35.

[316] Ibid., 48.

[317] Recently, scholars have contested Pokagon's authorship with the observation that *Queen of the Woods* contains Anishinaabemowin, the Anishinaabe language, not the Potawatomi language. However, Pokagon's chapter on the indigenous language in *Queen of the Woods* does not specify that the novel is written in Potawatomi, but instead gives a "brief sketch of the Algaic dialect," wherein "all parts of speech hinge on the verb, and nearly all the words in our language can be transformed into verbs," a statement that also applies to Anishinaabemowin, as the Schoolcraft chapter demonstrated. Given that Anishinaabemowin and the Potawatomi languages are related and that Anishinaabemowin was also used as a trade language well into the nineteenth century, Pokagon's language choice is scant proof against his composition of *Queen of the Woods*.

Language, Explained in English, published in Montreal by Beauchemin and Valois.[318] Bishop Baraga was the first Bishop of Marquette, Michigan, and a Catholic missionary to the Anishinaabeg. He published an Ojibwe or Anishinaabe grammar and dictionary, both of which went through several editions, as well as prayer books and works of instruction.[319] This source would have been of interest to Pokagon from both a cultural and religious perspective, as the Pokagon band of Potawatomi were also Catholic. Pokagon and Engle reprint the epigraph in *Queen of the Woods* with only slight modifications of punctuation as: "Let foreign nations of their language boast, / And, proud, with skilful pen, man's fate record; / I like the tongue which speak our men, our coast; / Who can not dress it well want wit, not word."[320] As it appears in the 1878 edition of Baraga's dictionary, the epigraph modifies Herbert's poem to emphasize a dichotomy between written and spoken languages and emphasize the hypocrisy of those who think indigenous languages inferior to English. Specifically, the epigraph switches Herbert's "What fine variety each tongue affords" to "And, proud, with skillful pen, man's fate record." In the context of Baraga's dictionary of Anishinaabemowin, Baraga figures as both the proud recorder of man's fate and the missionary who criticizes those who would deem Anishinaabemowin inferior as a supposedly oral language.

Both ethnographic verse and indigenous language dictionaries written by missionaries flourished in the first half of the nineteenth century in the United States. Ojibwe writer George Copway even contributed to this genre with his 1850 publication of *The Ojibway Conquest*, an epic poem describing lovers caught in an intertribal conflict, although, like Pokagon's, his

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[318] R.R. Bishop Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Otchipwe Language, Explained in English, Part I* (Montreal: Beauchemin and Valois, 1878).
[319] *The Catholic Encyclopedia an International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church*, ed. Charles G. Herbermann, et. al. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), 282-283.
[320] Pokagon, *Queen of the Woods*, 48.

authorship has been called into question.[321] Scholars have asserted that as much as one-third of Copway's historical publication "consists of excerpts poached from, among others, such hostile parties as Cass," Secretary of State under Andrew Jackson. Like Copway's "practice of cobbling together one's own words and the words of one's sources," Pokagon's borrowing of white settler poetry demonstrates his adherence to certain nineteenth century print customs, such as the inclusion of poetical epigraphs before chapters.[322] Copway includes these poetical epigraphs before his chapters and often quotes poems within his writing in his 1850 autobiography, *Recollections of a Forest Life*.[323] In both cases, these quotations bolster the Native American authors' claims to English cultural literacy.

At the same time, though, Pokagon and Engle bring the poetic adaptation into another context: late-nineteenth-century perceptions of American Indian languages, cultures, and peoples as oral, static, and premodern. Rather than confirming these stereotypes of indigenous peoples, the last line of Pokagon's adapted poem highlights a correspondence in the way that speakers of Potawatomi or Anishinaabemowin and English speakers conceptualize language in relation to culture. As the Schoolcraft chapter demonstrated, the Anishinaabeg emphasize that people perform culture and belonging, that Anishinaabeg being involves motion, enactment. Thus, Anishinaabe people are those who dress, act, and live in Anishinaabe ways. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this was a common way to think about culture and belonging. When non-Indians lived by indigenous customs and spoke indigenous languages, "they were accepted

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[321] John O'Leary, "'Tribes of the Eagle, the Panther, and Wolf': Nineteenth-Century Ethnographic Verse in the United States and Beyond," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 30, no. 3 (2008): 262-263; 268; Hinsley, *Savages and Scientists*, 50.
[322] Joshua David Bellin, *The Demon of the Continent: Indians and the Shaping of American Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 197-198.
[323] George Copway, *Recollections of a Forest Life: Or, the Life and Travels of Kah-ge-ga-gah-bowh, or, George Copway, Chief of the Ojibway Nation* (London: C. Gilpin, 1850).

as relatives and kinsfolk," albeit often without a clan assignment.[324] At this same time, Englishness or Frenchness was similarly performed through dress, speech, and, as in the case of the Schoolcrafts' literary circle, through wit, the demonstration of language mastery within a social setting. The last line of this poetic epigraph that Pokagon and Engle borrow demonstrates that mastery, suggesting commonalities as well as differences between Potawatomi and English-speaking peoples. Having the last word, even when those words are borrowed, Pokagon asserts that indigenous languages belong in American literature, so long as they are witty in both content and form.

The title page of *Queen of the Woods* also uses a poetic excerpt from a white settler poet: "The past can never be undone. / The new day brings the rising sun / To light the way of duty now / To children with the dusky brow."[325] The excerpt is from a poem by Luella D. Smith of Hudson, New York, who gave Pokagon a volume of her poems, "Wind Flowers," in exchange for "Red Man's Greeting" at the end of the Columbian Fair in Chicago. Upon receiving Smith's book, Pokagon responded, "'I trust you will not fail to leave something in verse for the benefit of our race.'" Upon returning home, Pokagon received a poem entitled, "The Cry of Cain," from Smith.[326]

For the epigraph on the title page of *Queen of the Woods*, Pokagon selects an excerpt from Smith's biblical poem about Cain's murder of his brother Abel. In it, Abel represents American Indians while Cain stands for the white settlers who are wracked with guilt for killing and removing the indigenous peoples of the United States from their land. Smith describes removal using the biblical metaphor: "I drove him from his fair estate / From East to West, with

[324] Helen Hornbeck Tanner, "Tribal Mixtures in Chicago Area Indian Villages," in *Indians of the Chicago Area*, ed. Terry Straus (Chicago: NAES College Press, 1990).
[325] Pokagon, *Queen of the Woods*.
[326] Ibid., 28-32.

endless hate: / At last he lay beneath my tread, / Brave son of forests, stark and dead, / Red Abel, my brother."[327] For his epigraph, Pokagon selects the moment when Cain regrets the murder of his brother, which has cursed him, and realizes: "The past can never be undone. / The new day brings the rising sun / To light the way of duty now / To children with the dusky brow / Of Abel, my brother."[328] Although Cain can never right the wrong of murdering his brother, standing in for Native Americans, he begins to understand his "duty" toward "children with the dusky brow," taking on the philanthropic language of nineteenth-century advocates for American Indians. This stance aligns the poetic excerpt with the dedication of "The Red Man's Rebuke" to friends of the American Indian. Indeed, the dedication of *Queen of the Woods* resembles that of "The Red Man's Rebuke" in the sense that Pokagon also dedicates his book "to all societies and individuals—benefactors of our race—who have so bravely stood for our rights, while poisoned arrows of bitter prejudice flew thick and fast about them, boldly declaring to all the world that 'the white man and the red man are brothers, and God is the father of all.'"[329]

The publisher's preface by Engle ends in another poem, earlier used to conclude the "Red Man's Greeting": "Is not the red man's wigwam home / As dear to him as costly dome? / Is not his loved ones' smile as bright / As the dear ones of the man that's white // Freedom—this selfsame freedom you adore— / Bade him defend his violated shore."[330] The quotation comes in part from a poem by the Philadelphia poet Marguerite St. Leon Loud, which often was excerpted in the nineteenth century in books of poetical quotations. Loud's poem ends differently than does Pokagon's excerpt of it: "Is not the red man's wigwam home / As dear to him as costly dome? /

[327] Ibid., 30.
[328] Ibid., 32.
[329] Pokagon, *Queen of the Woods*.
[330] Ibid., ii.

Is not his lov'd one's smile as bright / As the proud white man's worshipp'd light?"[331] In both cases, Loud's poem appears with the aforementioned Sprague excerpts that Pokagon changes and uses in the "Red Man's Rebuke," both appearing under the heading, "Indian—Savage." It is thus likely that Pokagon used similar, if not the same, books of poetical quotations to excerpt poems for his writings.

While critics from the 1960s to the present have questioned Pokagon's authorship of *Queen of the Woods*, these practices of poetic revision and reprinting are not the kinds of plagiarism of which Pokagon has often been accused. The most vociferous of these critics is anthropologist James Clifton, who asserts that Engle's wife "was the most likely 'ghost writer' of this cloying romantic frontier fantasy."[332] Accusations of ghost writing aside, the plagiarism found in Pokagon's works is rather a creative practice, common throughout the nineteenth century, of enhancing or complementing one's own writing with excerpts relevant to the topic at hand. For instance, William Huntting Howell's study *Against Self-Reliance: The Arts of Dependence in the Early United States* argues that older literary practices of adaptation and imitation as creative modes persisted well into the nineteenth century.[333] Besides Schoolcraft's publications, Longfellow also drew upon George Catlin's *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs and Condition of the North American Indian* and *Traditional History and*

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[331] John T. Watson, *Dictionary of Poetical Quotations, or, Elegant Extracts on Every Subject* (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1856), 342; John T. Watson, *Book of Elegant Poetical Extracts* (New York: Allen Brothers, 1869), 342.

[332] James A. Clifton, *The Pokagons, 1683-1983: Catholic Potawatomi Indians of the St. Joseph River Valley* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1894), 104. Clifton repeats this accusation in James A. Clifton, "Simon Pokagon's Sandbar: Potawatomi Claims to Chicago's Lakefront," *Michigan History* 71, no. 5 (1987): 14. See also: Everett Claspy, who quotes Michael Williams, then chair of the Pokagon Tribal Business Committee, for the opinion that Cyrus Engle's wife wrote much of *Queen of the Woods*. Everett Claspy, *The Potawatomi Indians of Southwestern Michigan* (Dowagiac, MI: n.p. 1966), 23, and Wolfgage Hochbruck, "Between Victorian Tract and Native American Novel," in *Victorian Brand, Indian Brand: The White Shadow on the Native Image*, ed. Naila Clerici (Torino: Segnalibro, 1993), footnote 29.

[333] William Huntting Howell, *Against Self-Reliance: The Arts of Dependence in the Early United States* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).

Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation, John Heckewelder's *History, Manners and Customs of the Indian Nations*, and John Tanner's *Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*.[334] Pokagon's choice to change and mix these poems was a common artistic decision, one that at the time indicated not a parasitical relation to literary history, but a masterful one.

Pokagon also reprinted hymns in *Queen of the Woods*. At the beginning of *Queen of the Woods*, when Pokagon comes back from school and goes with his mother to live in the woods, she sings a popular Anglican missionary hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," written by Reginald Heber in 1819. Uncharacteristically, Pokagon reproduces the hymn word-for-word, as his mother sings, "From Greenland's icy mountains, / From India's coral strand, / Where Afric's sunny fountains, / Roll down their golden sand, / From many an ancient river, / From many a palmy plain, / They call us to deliver / Their land from error's chain."[335] Pokagon writes that this song "so filled my heart with love divine that in my soul I saw Jesus standing with one hand on the sinner's head and the other resting on the throne of the Great Spirit, saying, 'Come unto me.'"[336] Upon singing a stanza, "and sometimes when half finished," Pokagon notes, his mother "would pause and listen, as if she loved to hear the echoing angel of the woods join in the refrain."[337] During one of these pauses at the end of the song, Pokagon surprises his mother, causing her to scream and turn around, then laugh "until all the woods replied."[338] At the end of the novel, Pokagon excerpts another hymn unchanged for his wife's funeral. An "Indian maiden"

[334] O'Leary, "'Tribes of the Eagle.'"
[335] Pokagon, *Queen of the Woods*, 59; Kenneth W. Osbeck, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," in *101 Hymn Stories: The Inspiring True Stories Behind 101 Favorite Hymns* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1982), 78-79.
[336] Pokagon, *Queen of the Woods*, 60.
[337] Ibid.
[338] Ibid.

at the funeral sings, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep / From which none ever wake to weep; / A calm and undisturbed repose, / Unbroken by the last of foes."[339]

Elsewhere in the novel, while wandering the woods, Pokagon meets Lonidaw, a beautiful Potawatomi woman who mimics birds and has a magic touch with animals, perhaps the result of her mother hiding among the animals in the swamp to avoid removal. After courting, Pokagon and Lonidaw marry and find brief happiness in the woods. This happiness is broken, however, when Pokagon is persuaded to send his son to school, where he becomes an alcoholic and returns home to die. Shortly thereafter, his daughter drowns from a canoe accident caused by drunken settlers, and Lonidaw becomes sick and dies from trying to rescue this daughter. In his novel, Pokagon effectively loses his entire family to the ill effects of alcohol. After his wife's death, Pokagon has a vision of the entanglement of United States colonialism with alcoholism. He sees a creature wrapped in a stars-and-stripes blanket and American eagle, carrying under his right arm poisonous snakes, which escape in all directions, and in his left arm a scorpion whip, which sounds more like a gun than a lash.[340]

Although *Queen of the Woods* is clearly a temperance novel as well as romance novel, Pokagon also composed a temperance-free version of the story. Pokagon's "Queen of the Wood" was a song performed at a concert by children from the Ray and Jackson Park Schools of Chicago.[341] Pokagon's song summarizes the romantic aspects of the novel while leaving out the call to temperance at its center. The song tells "Of a dusky-eyed maid long, long ago, / To whom squirrels would chat in the best way they could." This maiden was hailed by all as "Queen of the Wood." The chorus reiterates this point: "Queen of the Wood, Queen of the Wood! / All hail! all

[339] Ibid., 182.
[340] Ibid., 191-197.
[341] Ibid., 235-236.

hail! Queen of the Wood!" Flowers smiled as she passed, birds sang for her, as "wherever she went in her sunshiny mood, / The children all hailed her as 'Queen of the Wood.'" The song notes that Pokagon courted this Queen, and they were married.[342]

Pokagon's creation of multiple versions of his Queen of the Woods story is characteristic of nineteenth-century popular forms of authorship that make broad critical dismissals based on genre or heroic authorial intention difficult. Nevertheless, such generic transformations problematize simple conclusions about Pokagon's political intentions. As a novel *Queen of the Woods* fiercely indicts the weaponization of alcohol against American Indians. With his hybrid generic approach to the novel, Pokagon represents a tribal leader both innovating aesthetically and defending sovereignty. Yet, with the political stinger removed from the song version, Pokagon's "Queen of the Wood" becomes a more palatable, romantic story for white Chicago children that, like the earlier birchbark pamphlet, reaches out to a western audience in less confrontational and aesthetically innovative ways.

CONCLUSION

While the "White City" stood as a monument to American ingenuity and projected a utopian vision of the country's future, the Midway Plaisance was praised as a "'great object lesson' in anthropology by leading anthropologists" as it "provided visitors with ethnological, scientific sanction for the American view of the nonwhite world as barbaric and childlike and gave a scientific basis to the racial blueprint for building a utopia."[343] The Chicago Columbian World's Exposition not only introduced fairgoers to evolutionary ideas about race, it brought

[342] Ibid., 236-237.
[343] Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 40-41.

them face-to-face with living examples of racial diversity presented so as to solidify racial prejudices in entertaining ways.

Simon Pokagon was also familiar with the power of what were then called "object lessons." In *Queen of the Woods*, Pokagon recounts of an Ottawa woman named "Ash-taw" who traveled among indigenous peoples as a temperance worker: "Her strong hold was to give object-lessons."[344] Ash-taw gave these lessons by tricking American Indian children into holding snake eggs, which she called "whiskey eggs," the surprise triggering a negative association with alcohol in their young minds. Pokagon admired such tricks and indeed used them in his own writing. He presented the "Red Man's Rebuke" or "Red Man's Greeting" in a birch bark form that led fairgoers to view it as a souvenir. Packaged inside, however, was not only a diatribe against the colonialism celebrated at that very exhibition, but also poems stolen and revised from obscure white poets. This was Pokagon's form of a whiskey egg; the crowds who saw his assimilative, progressive speeches could hardly expect to be attacked through the harmless birchbark pamphlet that many doubtless purchased as a souvenir of the exhibition celebrating United States colonialism. Likewise, newspapers praised the pamphlet for its indigenous poetry, apparently unaware that much of that poetry was plagiarized from white settler sources.

Against the odds, as souvenirs and articles in ephemeral magazines and newspapers, Pokagon's printed works would outlast his manuscripts. According to an article in the Niles *Sun Star* on February 9, 1897, all of Pokagon's manuscripts were destroyed in a fire at his home a year before his death.[345] An article titled "Chief Pokagon's New Home," from the *Grand Rapids Herald* on August 8, 1898, confirms this story shortly before Pokagon's death early the next

[344] Pokagon, *Queen of the Woods*, 135.
[345] Cecilia Bain Buechner, *The Pokagons, Indiana Historical Society Publications* 10, no. 5 (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society Publications, 1933), 325.

year. Pokagon's "property recently destroyed by fire," the article asserts, "has been replaced by a new home secured by the kind subscription of his many friends," which is "almost completed and is greatly appreciated by the owner."[346] In terms of the birch bark manuscripts Pokagon alluded to in his own writing, however, the loss of his personal correspondence and manuscripts is not a complete loss. Fire had long been part of Pokagon's life and work; as a Potawatomi he was a "Keeper of the Fire," and over the course of his life he devoted himself to combating the devastations of "fire water" within his community. Birch bark scrolls, when worn out or left without a proper inheritor, are burned. Destroyed or incomplete archives have long been a part of indigenous history in the Americas, as when the Spanish infamously burned Mayan codices. In his novel *Heirs of Columbus*, Gerald Vizenor notes that Almost Browne, the laser trickster of the new tribal world, "learned how to read from books that had been burned in a library fire; he sounded the words on the center of the pages, and imagined the others, the words that were burned on the sides."[347]

In Pokagon's case, what fills in these smoldering spaces is his legacy as a bookseller and performer. Tourists to the World's Columbian Exposition bought his pamphlets, and American newspapers and magazines carefully recorded his speeches and reprinted excerpts of his literary works. This makes Pokagon's archive an incomplete and circulatory one, as newspapers and magazines excerpted the parts of Pokagon's oeuvre that appealed to their own needs and reconstructive desires at the time. But in their haste to embrace the "Indian Longfellow," they also overlooked his plagiarism and rewriting of obscure white settler poetry, lending a new meaning to Pokagon's poetic title.

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[346] "Chief Pokagon's New Home," *Grand Rapids Herald* (Grand Rapids, MI), Aug. 8, 1898
[347] Gerald Vizenor, *The Heirs of Columbus* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1991), 83.

While Pokagon promoted one version of himself as an American Indian writer, he gave another version in his published works with their stolen and remixed lines about American Indians and American progress. To his contemporaries, Pokagon was an example of what American Indians could be as citizens of the future United States. To literary critics now, he is something else, a figure neither entirely transgressive nor conciliatory. Just as his father anticipated and avoided Removal through alliance with the Catholic Church, Simon Pokagon allied himself with the Progressive Movement, selling pamphlets and books that demanded action on issues important to indigenous peoples: temperance, annuities, and environmental control. In doing so, Pokagon provided a model to other indigenous writers of how to employ popular poetic genres to perform indigeneity in ways that appeal to settler desires while also furthering one's own literary career and tribal national claims.

Chapter 3: From "Verse-Wampum" to *Legends of Vancouver*: E. Pauline Johnson and the Changing Marketplace of American Indian Poetry

INTRODUCTION

Born to an English mother and a Mohawk father, E. Pauline Johnson over the course of her career emphasized her multinational identity to support her work as a poet, artist, and performer in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Johnson remains a controversial literary figure, particularly in the fields of Native Studies and Native American literature.[348] Critical reception of Johnson to date has foregrounded her race, nationality, or indigeneity, making competing claims about Johnson's identity.[349] Johnson grappled with her Mohawk and Anglo-Canadian identity as she struggled to assert herself as a poet, performer, and author over the course of her career. Yet she also faced challenges as a single woman and actress during a time when both were disreputable choices with implications for social class and relationships. Moreover, at the time of Johnson's performances, indigenous women were stereotyped as wildly sexual, a characterization that Johnson both refuted and reinforced when it suited her purposes.

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[348] Literary critic and fellow Grand River Mohawk Rick Monture argues of Johnson, "Although she presented stories of injustice in this country, it is no surprise that Johnson has sometimes been criticized for writing within a colonialist framework that ignored the real social and political concerns faced by her people, choosing instead to convey only a romantic view of the history of the Iroquois." Rick Monture, *We Share Our Matters: Two Centuries of Writing and Resistance at Six Nations of the Grand River* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014), 101. Strong-Boag and Gerson also agree that Johnson's investment in Eurocentric romantic distortions and stereotypes of indigeneity aided narratives of dominant Euro-Canadian nationalism and prejudice against First Nations of the time. Veronica Jane Strong-Boag and Carole Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe: The Times and Texts of E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000). Janice Fiamengo shares a similar view in her article, Janice Fiamengo, "Reconsidering Pauline (On Veronica Strong-Boag and Carole Gerson's *Paddling her own canoe*)," *Canadian Literature* 167 (2000): 174-176.

[349] Canadian literary critics Veronica Strong-Boag and Carole Gerson take a Canadian nationalist as well as First Nations approach to Johnson that shows throughout their volume on her literature, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*. Moreover, Gerson followed Johnson's contemporaries in calling her the "most Canadian" of poets in an article, Carole Gerson, "'The Most Canadian of all Canadian Poets': Pauline Johnson and the Construction of a National Literature," *Canadian Literature* 158 (1998). Others, such as fellow Mohawk poet Beth Brant, have focused on her identity as a Mohawk literary predecessor and insisted that her work speaks to a local tribal context. Brant wrote, "Pauline Johnson was a Nationalist. Canada may attempt to claim her as theirs, but Johnson belonged to only one Nation, the Mohawk Nation" in Beth Brant, *Writing as Witness: Essay and Talk* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1994), 7.

Contemporary criticisms of Johnson's poetry and performances often used aesthetic codes to make judgments about her morality and sexuality as a woman performer. A friend, Arthur Henry (Harry) O'Brien, criticized Johnson for "debasing herself" in her performances because "she was using tricks to keep the public happy and had strayed a long way from pure poetry."[350] Debasement was a term applied at this time to sexual deviance or a lack of purity in women. Likewise, "tricks" connoted the sexual activities of a prostitute. Applying these words to Johnson's performances, O'Brien criticized her choice of profession while purportedly only addressing aesthetic issues of poetry. Johnson retorted:

> Well, the reason is that the public will not listen to lyrics, will not appreciate real poetry, will in fact not have me as an entertainer if I give them nothing but rhythm, cadence, beauty, thought…I have had dreams of 'educating' the vulgar taste to Poetry, not action. *I will* do it some time, when this hard, cold, soulless 'reason' for bending to their approval ceases to exist.[351]

Johnson draws O'Brien's attention to her audience's expectations to be entertained in certain stereotypical and even sexual ways by a Mohawk woman poet and performer. Johnson asserts that she performs on the stage so that she can finance the publication of a book of her own poetry, which is her true "reason." She likely expected that her performances, even at the cost of debasing herself or her poetry, would drive sales of her books, providing further impetus for her to continue touring. *The White Wampum*, her first book, is a slim volume, a good size for transporting for selling after performances. If Johnson did not initially sell books at her performances, her lecture partner Walter McRaye would eventually depend upon the audiences at these performances to sell her later book, *Legends of Vancouver*, when Johnson was too sick to perform. From this instance, it seems that Johnson's performances drove her audiences to buy her books, both as gifts and as sentimental souvenirs of the performances they witnessed.

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[350] Betty Keller, *Pauline: A Biography of Pauline Johnson* (Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 1981), 71.
[351] Ibid.,72.

Although O'Brien cautioned Johnson against, in effect, 'selling out' in the hurry to publish a book, her other literary-minded friends, Hector Charlesworth and Charles G.D. Roberts, encouraged her to publish a book of poems quickly before her print audience had its fill of her poems in magazines and anthologies.[352] This advice points to the contested terms for "poetry" in the nineteenth-century Anglo-American scene. Over the course of Johnson's career, public literary tastes in Native American writing shifted from poems to other genres, such as legends and ethnographic stories. Johnson's experiences also speak to the changing relationship between poem-writing as a career and being a performer or writing in more lucrative genres such as the short story, addressed to popular magazine audiences.

The American literary marketplace transformed into a powerhouse from the 1830s to the 1890s with the aid of technological developments in papermaking, the cylinder press, cheaper postal routes, rising literacy rates, and wider distribution facilitated by railroads. New genres and formats proliferated with the penny presses and weeklies of the 1840s, which published fiction along with the news and mixed popular with elite genres. By publishing in periodicals, authors were able to reach broad audiences. By the 1880s, *Harper's Monthly* and the *Century* achieved circulations of 200,000 in the United States alone. Most nineteenth-century authors published in magazines, journals, or newspapers, and some women writers, like Fanny Fern and Lydia Maria Child, made good incomes from their articles and columns. Women's poetry was widespread in these nineteenth-century periodicals, setting a precedent for modernist women poets. Nevertheless, many of the most popular authors of the time were fiction writers like Harriet Beecher Stowe and journalists like Fanny Fern. When authorship did open up to women as a professional career, it was through the field of journalism, particularly travel writing. This is

[352] Ibid., 73.

reflected in Johnson's career through her canoeing and travel stories, many of which appear in magazines designed for specific audiences like mothers and boys. By shifting from the feminine status of a poetess to a reporter or even ethnographer, Johnson claimed a wider audience for her writings through her engagement with the article and short story forms and a more lucrative career for herself.[353]

These navigations of genre, which have drawn concern from both Johnson's literary friends and present-day critics, continue to impact the reading of her poetry and performances. Yet attention to different generic markers than those favored by previous critics allows for a reconfiguration of Native American poetry's importance to American poetry and modernism. Combining a formalist reading practice with a book historical approach allows us to understand the formal choices that Johnson made when preparing her poems for print. Johnson used the term "verse-wampum" to describe her earliest work in codex format, and by paying close attention to the forms of her poetry—from *The White Wampum* to printings and reprintings of her poems in serials to *Legends of Vancouver*—we can better understand Johnson's generic and publication strategies in relation to the shifting literary marketplace for indigenous poetry during her career.

Johnson's move toward publishing poetry with ethnographic overtones in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, culminating in what most at the time would consider the full-blown ethnography of *Legends of Vancouver*, was a response to a changing literary marketplace for American Indian poetry. In the early twentieth century, musicologists and

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353 Susan Belasco Smith and Kenneth M. Price, "Introduction: Periodical Literature in Social and Historical Context," in *Periodical Literature in Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. Kenneth M. Price and Susan Belasco Smith (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 3-7; Paula Bennett, "Not Just Filler and Not Just Sentimental: Women's Poetry in American Victorian Periodicals, 1860-1900," in *Periodical Literature in Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. Kenneth M. Price and Susan Belasco Smith (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 202-204; Carol Klimick Cyganowski, *Magazine Editors and Professional Authors in Nineteenth-Century America: The Genteel Tradition and the American Dream* (New York: Garland, 1988), 35-36; Mary Kelly, *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

ethnologists like Natalie Curtis and Mary Austin began collecting what they variously called "Indian songs," "Indian poetry," "Indian verse," and, later, "Amerind verse." Austin notes that early attempts to sell her translations of American Indian song-poems were rejected by magazines like the *Atlantic Monthly*, whose editor suggested that some of them might be "published on their own merit as verse, provided the author would frankly admit their authorship." Just a few years later, however, "less prestigious magazines like *McClure's* and *Everybody's* began to print not only [Austin's] translations, but others." A watershed moment, in Austin's estimation, was the 1916 publication of Cronyn's anthology of American Indian verse, the 1918 version of which included Johnson's poems "The Lost Lagoon" and "The Song my Paddle Sings."[354] Indigenous poetry at the beginning of the twentieth century engaged with many formal shifts in poetry commonly attributed to Modernism, such as experimentation in line breaks, indentation, and free verse.

The typographical choice to typeset the American Indian songs as if they were modernist poems, with certain lines indented—obviously not a feature of the oral songs themselves—has larger ramifications for both Native American poetry and Modernism. In the Navajo "Song of the Rain Chant," the refrain, "Comes the rain / Comes the rain with me" is indented, presumably to differentiate it from the rest of the stanza, which changes.[355] This makes the indigenous chant form look acceptably like free verse or Imagism, with stanzas surmised presumably from pauses or changes in topic, music, or other oral cues. Indeed, when Austin contemplates the orality of indigenous verse, she thinks in terms of typography. She writes, "We have to bear in mind that melody had to do all the work for the primitive that is done now with print, with punctuation and

[354] George W. Cronyn, *The Path On the Rainbow: An Anthology of Songs and Chants from the Indians of North America* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1918), 240-241.
[355] Ibid., 143.

capitals and italics, with visual arrangement of line and stanza. In other words, melody is the mold of form, the matrix of stanza arrangement."[356] Louis Untermeyer criticizes this stance in *The Dial* in 1919 as being falsely modernist: "Nor is one assisted materially by the arbitrary arrangement of words and a pretentious typography that is foreign to our native—though it may be native to Ezra Pound, 'H. D.,' and Richard Adington." Moreover, Untermeyer derides Johnson's "The Song My Paddle Sings" as "neither original nor aboriginal," instead composed of "time-dusty" "rhymed sweetmeats."[357] Although ethnologist Alice Fletcher collaborated with Omaha Francis LaFlesche, one of the first American Indian ethnologists, Austin likewise notes of Fletcher's translations, "One cannot help thinking that an Indian poet without any knowledge of classic English forms would have proceeded very differently."[358] Charles Eastman emerges as another "acceptable" indigenous translator. Johnson does not fit into this vision, despite her status as one of the most popular indigenous poets of her time due to her knowledge of publishing and strong understanding of classical English forms, which informed both her poetry and, later, her legends.

Johnson chose to publish poetry and claim both her Native and white English heritage in an effort to represent both sides of her family history. In her writing and bookmaking, she navigated generational concerns that were also racial and sexual ones unique to an indigenous woman who was both a writer and a performer. While writing poetry was a common activity for middle-class women at the time, acting was not. Johnson's occupation as a performer brought up

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[356] Mary Austin, *The American Rhythm: Studies and Reexpressions of Amerindian Songs* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1930), 49.
[357] Louis Untermeyer, "The Indian as Poet," *The Dial* 66, no. 7 (1919): 240.
[358] For more on the collaboration between Alice Fletcher and Francis LaFlesche, see: Michael V. Pisani, *Imagining Native America in Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Neil M. Judd, *The Bureau of American Ethnology: A Partial History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967); Joan Mark, *A Stranger in Her Native Land: Alice Fletcher and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988).

questions of sexuality and respectability that influenced her relationships through both audience and kinship expectations. The decisions Johnson made about her poetry and its publication demonstrate the centrality of indigenous writers to the narrative of the development of American poetry. What if modernism was catalyzed less by Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman than by writers like E. Pauline Johnson? What if modernist primitivism was no racist accident but instead spoke to the heart of where modernist poetry came from, that is, ethnologists' adaptations of indigenous songs? What did poetry offer Johnson at different stages of her career? How and why did she use different poetic forms, such as the lyric and the legend, as well as different aesthetics, from sentimentality to framing techniques, to reach different audiences? While Johnson's poems were often written and performed for specific audiences, they also reached larger audiences through reprintings in newspapers and magazines across Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. Moreover, Johnson was an indigenous writer and poet at a moment of transformation for both indigenous writers and the genre of poetry. She stands on the cusp of the anthropological turn in indigenous writing and writing about indigenous peoples and the turn to modernism in poetry, transformations that end up connected to each other in their pursuit of indigenous forms.

Johnson was "one of the most widely read Indian authors in the United States" in the early twentieth century. Her publications for *Mother's Magazine* alone reached an audience of over 600,000. But she was far from the only indigenous North American poet in the nineteenth century. In 1868, a posthumously published collection of John Rollin Ridge's poems, most of which he wrote early in his career, entered the literary market, joining the fiction and poetry he published under the name "Yellow Bird."[359] Robert Dale Parker recently recovered a plethora of nineteenth-century Native American poems from regional newspapers and journals in his 2011

[359] A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff, *American Indian Literatures: An Introduction, Bibliographic Review, and Selected Bibliography* (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1990), 65-66.

anthology, *Changing is Not Vanishing*. Johnson did, however, introduce "a dominant theme of twentieth-century American Indian fiction" through her short stories: "the mixed-bloods' search for their place," found particularly in "A Red Girl's Reasoning," a contribution that causes critics to position her work transitionally between the centuries.[360]

In poetry, Johnson is also part of the twentieth-century shift toward ethnographic poetry and modernism, as her generic switch from poetry to legends will reveal. Alexander Posey, the subject of the next chapter, lived a shorter life in the twentieth century than Johnson, dying tragically young in 1908. Like Johnson, he also drew inspiration from Robert Burns, whose use of dialect and regionalisms he admired, though for Posey publishing poetry was mostly a youthful activity.[361] Charles Eastman was active in the first decade of the twentieth century, producing with his wife and coauthor several books of legends and adventure stories, some divided by gender, and some retold for children.[362] John Milton Oskison also began publishing short stories at the turn-of-the-century, including one, "Only the Master Shall Praise," that won a competition by *The Century Magazine*. Oskison became an editorial writer for the *New York Evening Post* and continued to write prize-winning short stories. He was a prolific writer during the 1920s and 1930s, publishing four novels, a novelized biography of Sam Houston, and a history of Tecumseh, as well as an incomplete autobiography.[363] Zitkála-Šá originally published much of her autobiography in *Harper's* and the *Atlantic Monthly* at the turn of the century, before marketing it as a book under the title *American Indian Stories* in 1921. Her choice of titles generalizes from her experience as an American Indian woman to tribal stories, ending with a

[360] Ibid., 67.
[361] Ibid., 68.
[362] Ibid., 69.
[363] John Milton Oskison, *Tales of the Old Indian Territory and Essays on the Indian Condition*, ed. Lionel Larré (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012).

section that calls her readers to action, titled "America's Indian Problem." Boston publisher Ginn and Company also commissioned Zitkála-Šá to write *Old Indian Legends*, which they published in 1901 as a collection of stories from various tribal nations marketed for children. She was also active with the Society of American Indians (SAI) and published her poems in their *American Indian Magazine*, which she edited for a few years.[364] Another founding member of the SAI and editor of their magazine, the Seneca Arthur C. Parker, published *Seneca Myths and Folktales* in 1923 through the Buffalo Historical Society. An archaeologist and ethnologist by profession, Parker's work illuminated the importance of the Iroquois to New York State and the world.[365]

By the 1920s, there were more dubious claims of indigenous authorship as well. Sylvester Clark Long (who went by Long Lance, a name suggested by his teacher "to help him gain greater credibility as an Indian"), toured with a Wild West Show and claimed Cherokee tribal membership. Later, he became a journalist and published a fictional autobiography in 1928 called *Long Lance*, much of which was based on interviews conducted in the early 1920s with Blackfeet and Blood tribal members in Alberta, Canada. Like Johnson, he lectured on Indian themes dressed in full tribal regalia, published in popular journals, and was praised by Ernest Thompson Seton.[366]

Cherokee Will Rogers was also an important figure by the late 1910s, participating in Wild West shows as the Cherokee Kid, then vaudeville and the Ziegfeld Follies before transitioning to print journalism, Hollywood, and the radio, where he became a beloved

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[364] Zitkála-Šá (Gertrude Bonnin), *American Indian Stories* (Washington, D.C.: Hayworth, 1921), Amherst College Archives and Special Collections; James H. Cox, "'Yours for the Indian Cause': Gertrude Bonnin's Activist Editing at *The American Indian Magazine*, 1915-1919," in *Blue Pencils and Hidden Hands: Women Editing Periodicals, 1830-1910*, ed. Sharon M. Harris and Ellen Gruber Garvey, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004): 173-201.
[365] Arthur C. Parker, *Seneca Myths and Folk Tales* (Buffalo: Buffalo Historical Society, 1923); Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, *Inheriting the Past: The Making of Arthur C. Parker and Indigenous Archaeology*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009.
[366] Ruoff, *American Indian Literatures*, 70.

American cultural hero.[367] Northern Paiute author and activist Sarah Winnemucca performed on stage with her family as "A Paiute Royal Family" after fleeing the Paiute War. When the US cavalry killed her mother and several members of her extended family, Winnemucca became an advocate for Native American rights, conducting lectures across the country. She traveled to Washington, DC upon the internment of the Paiute at Yakima, Washington, and lobbied Congress and the President for their freedom. She also served American forces as an interpreter and guide, as well as a teacher for captive American Indians. In 1883, she published the autobiography and Paiute history, *Life Among the Paiutes: Their Wrongs and Claims* and afterwards conducted a lecture tour on the East Coast before returning to Lovelock, Nevada to found a private school for American Indian children.[368]

Although ethnographic books of indigenous poetry boomed in the early twentieth century, until the publication of Parker's anthology of early American Indian poetry in 2011, scholars recognized just a few indigenous poets before the 1930s. In addition to Alex Posey, these poets included Bertrand N.O. Walker [Hen-toh], whose book of dialect poetry, *Yon-Doo-Shah-We-Ah*, was published in 1924, and Lynn Riggs, who published a volume of poetry called *The Iron Dish* in 1930.[369] Although Parker notes that he "might almost as well have extended the volume to 1960 or 1975, that is, to the great flowering of American Indian literature sometimes known as the American Indian Renaissance," he decided to focus his anthology on pre-1930s poets, about whom little has been written, in the hopes that "someone else will gather the poetry

[367] Amy M. Ware, *The Cherokee Kid: Will Rogers, Tribal Identity, and the Making of an American Icon* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2015).
[368] Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, *Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1994).
[369] Ruoff, *American Indian Literatures*, 74.

of the next several decades."[370] 1930, moreover, marked a moment of change in the poetry as well as American Indian world, with the rise of Modernism and largely forgotten proletarian poetry of the left as well as significant changes in federal Indian policy.[371] Anthropologists and ethnologists continued to expand their presence; their interventions in Indian Country culminated in the acerbic essay by Vine Deloria, Jr., "Anthropologists and Other Friends," published first in *Playboy* and then in his 1969 manifesto *Custer Died for Your Sins*. Although Parker asserts that "Early Indian poetry rarely worries about ethnography," in fact these poets were surrounded by ethnographic forces in the form of anthropologists, government boarding schools, and even antiquarian friends.[372] What Parker objects to in early American Indian poetry is the privileging of the ethnologists' work over the work of the proprietary author. Yet even then it is not so clear that strings are not attached to these poems Parker collected: many were written as assignments in boarding schools, a common practice throughout the nineteenth century. Moreover, the poems were published not only in Native-run newspapers, but also in venues like those of the Carlisle Indian School as examples of refined education to garner donations. To ignore the impact of the ethnologists' recording of oral songs and rituals is to glaze over the discomforting history of early indigenous poetry.

Studying Johnson's poetry and its evolution over the course of her career also addresses many of the larger concerns of this dissertation about the relationship between gender expectations and career management, poetic aesthetics, and cross-racial and cross-tribal collaboration. By focusing on the beginning and end of Johnson's career, this chapter examines a major shift in audience expectations of poetry at the dawn of the New Woman and modernist

[370] Robert Dale Parker, *Changing Is Not Vanishing: A Collection of Early American Indian Poetry to 1930* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 5.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Ibid., 7.

eras. Moreover, thinking about Johnson's early and late career as a task in managing gender, cross-racial, and aesthetic expectations helps us to address the conjunction of poetry and indigeneity and mark how that relationship shifts over time from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. By first examining the familial, political, and tribal backgrounds within which Johnson became a poet and promoted her books, then turning to the specific publishing history of her first and last books, *The White Wampum* and *Legends of Vancouver*, it will become clear that Johnson made deliberate formal choices in moving from lyrical poems to books and legends. She chose what genre of poetry to publish and perform and how to transition, at the end of her life, from composing lyrical and dramatic poetry that translated well to the stage to intertribal legends. Johnson's book history also maps out a larger context for indigenous books at the time, from her start in London, to her insistence throughout her career on her identity as both English and Mohawk, to the complexity of her Canadian citizenship. Johnson's upbringing and experiences as an indigenous woman prepared her to write poetry as part of a multimedia career that defied generic and kinship expectations.

Johnson's career and family history also attest to the inherently transnational nature of poetry appreciation, publication, and performance in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Anglophone world. Scholars such as Meredith McGill, Kate Flint, and Kirsten Silva Gruesz have prepared the way for a transnational approach to authorship for a figure like Johnson through their work on the transatlantic circulation of poetry, cosmopolitan American Indians, and Anglo-American writing about Cuba in the nineteenth century. Jahan Ramazani has argued for a reconceptualization of twentieth- and twenty-first-century poetry as transnational.[373] Nevertheless, nationalist anthologies and histories have dominated nineteenth-century literary

[373] Jahan Ramazani, *A Transnational Poetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009)

and cultural scholarship and teaching for some time. Authors like Johnson are doubly ambiguous in these nationalist narratives for their status as poets as well as their dual heritage. McGill highlights both "provincialism and modernism" as downplaying the role of poetry in nineteenth-century American literature. Instead, nineteenth-century American poetry becomes distinctive only as the site of the modernist break with its poetic conventions as seen through the examples of Whitman and Dickinson.[374] Power dynamics between Great Britain and its former colony, the United States, and present dominion, Canada, also influenced the circulation and publication of poetry during the nineteenth century. The United States promised a wealth of readers for British and Canadian poets, but it also threatened them with lax copyright laws and rampant unremunerated reprinting of poetry in both books and periodicals. Great Britain remained a powerful marker of prestige for American and Canadian writers, with praise from the British establishment signifying the highest of literary encomia in the nineteenth century.[375]

Johnson responded to these shifts in the literary marketplace in the early twentieth century. What if the formal choices of indigenous poets like E. Pauline Johnson were helping to invent modernist poetry as we don't quite understand it today? A modernism that, by its very modernity, challenged notions of indigenous people as trapped in pre-modernity? This chapter first establishes the relevant familial, poetic, religious, and performative aspects of Johnson's upbringing on the Grand River Six Nations Reserve in Ontario, Canada. From this personal history emerges the second section, about Mohawk and Six Nations tribal history in Canada, how colonial entanglements affected Six Nations politics, and their bearing on Johnson's family. The chapter then turns to Johnson's management of her poetic and literary career as a published

[374] Meredith McGill, "Introduction: The Traffic in Poems," in *The Traffic in Poems: Nineteenth-Century Poetry and Transatlantic Exchange*, ed. Meredith McGill (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 4.
[375] Ibid., 4-5.

author of her first book of poetry, *The White Wampum*, and a book of Coast Salish and cross-tribal legends, *Legends of Vancouver*. Close readings of each of these books follow, first with an examination of her family's influence on *The White Wampum*, wherein Johnson symbolically offers her "verse-wampum" to her widowed mother and dead father. Next, close readings from *Legends of Vancouver* illuminate the shifting field of indigenous poetry in the early twentieth century, as Johnson navigated from lyric or dramatic poems to ethnographic work, culminating in *Legends of Vancouver* at the end of her life.

GROWING UP AT CHIEFSWOOD: LITERARY AND FAMILIAL ENTANGLEMENTS

Johnson's family was part of a Mohawk Christian elite running the Six Nations Confederacy Council on the Grand River Reserve outside Brant, Ontario. Her father, George H.M. Johnson, became interpreter for the Anglican Church and, through those connections, met Emily Howells, Johnson's mother, whom he married in 1853. Separated from many other Six Nations people by their upper-middle-class lifestyle, the Johnsons lived in Chiefswood mansion outside of Brantford, where the children grew up surrounded by servants, literature, music, and governesses and attended private and collegiate schools.[376] At Chiefswood the Johnson children performed music and literature for guests, Pauline showing a particular gift for poetry. The Johnsons had an enormous library, and Pauline recounts, "by the time I was twelve I had read every line Scott ever wrote, every line of Longfellow, so much of Byron, Shakespeare, and Emerson."[377]

[376] Strong-Boag and Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*, 49.
[377] Keller, *Pauline*, 30; Marcus Van Steen, *Pauline Johnson: Her Life and Work* (Toronto: Hodder & Stoughton, 1968), 6.

Johnson describes the class values that her mother instilled as moral values that repressed sexuality, particularly women's sexuality. She notes that her mother Emily told her it was "'not aristocratic' to allow boys to touch her."[378] Efforts to "tame" aboriginal sexuality were hardly confined to the elite; a widespread colonial practice, according to Jean Barman, such constraints were often furthered through conversion to Christianity.[379] By raising her daughter to have aristocratic sexual values, Emily Howells may have been trying to protect her from common accusations against indigenous women for having "wild" sexuality. The environment in which Johnson first encountered and practiced poetry was thus the racially, sexually, and class-charged one of an English and Mohawk, aristocratically aspiring, middle-class home.

In addition to sexual prudence, Johnson's mother also taught her children to respect their father. Johnson writes in a thinly veiled autobiographical work that Emily "hated the glare of the fierce light that beat upon prominent lives, the unrest of fame, the disquiet of public careers."[380] Nevertheless, Johnson recounts of her mother:

> Each distinction won by her husband only established a higher standard for their children to live up to. She prayed and hoped and prayed again that they would all be worthy such a father, that they would never fall short of his excellence. To this end she taught, labored for, and loved them, and they, in turn, child-wise, responded to her teaching, imitating her allegiance to their father, reflecting her fealty, and duplicated her actions. So she molded these little ones with the mother-hand that they felt through all their after lives, which were but images of her own in all that concerned their father.[381]

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[378] Pauline Johnson, "From the Child's Viewpoint" (1910), quoted in Strong-Boag and Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*, 51.
[379] Jean Barman, "Taming Aboriginal Sexuality: Gender, Power, and Race in British Columbia, 1850-1900," in *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Aboriginal Women's History in Canada*, ed. Mary-Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 277.
[380] Van Steen, *Pauline Johnson*, 217.
[381] Pauline Johnson, "My Mother," quoted in Van Steen, *Pauline Johnson*, 218.

By using the words "allegiance" and "fealty," borne out in actions, to describe her mother's regard for her husband, Johnson demonstrates the active role Emily took in her upbringing as a function of paternalism.

Later in this same work, Johnson describes a conversation between the youngest child, a writer, and her mother, as the mother asks, "Do you ever think, dear…that you are writing the poetry that always lived in an unexpressed state here in my breast?" Her daughter, "who was beginning to mount the ladder of literature," answers that no, "I never knew you wanted to *write* poetry, although I knew you loved it." "Indeed, I did," the mother affirms, "but I never could find expression for it. I was made to sing, I often think, but I never had the courage to sing in public. But I did want to write poetry, and now you, dear, are doing it for me. How proud your father would have been of you!" The daughter bursts out, child-like, "Oh, he knows! I'm sure he knows all that I have written…And if you like my verses, Marmee, I am sure he does, for he knows."[382] This imagined interaction between a mother and daughter illuminates Johnson's perception of her mother as a shaping force in her poetry. Perhaps Johnson is also imaginatively easing her family's disapproval of her career as a performer, since in the story the mother reasons that public performance, or singing, has become necessary to the practice of poetry, even for a woman.

The story also helps address the question of Johnson's religious beliefs as well. Her parents, as in real life, were devout Anglicans, but more devoted to literature than religion. Of her mother's death, Johnson writes, "And one night the Great Messenger knocked softly at her door, and with a sweet, gentle sigh she turned and followed where he led—joining gladly the father of her children in the land that holds both whites and Indians as one."[383] In this story

[382] Ibid., 226.
[383] Ibid., 227.

Johnson blends elements of a nondescript indigenous religion in the form of the "Great Messenger" and Christian images of heaven not on some angel's cloud, but in a "land" open to both indigenous and white people. The end of the story finds the daughter, "who writes the verses her mother always felt" saying to herself as she "puts a last line to a story, or a sweet cadence into a poem," "She knows—she knows."[384] Through her writing—first her poetry, but later even her stories—Johnson continues communicating with her dead parents, whose approval she seeks with a kind of religious devotion.

After attending school in Brantford, Johnson returned home and focused her efforts on writing poetry. Her first publication, "To Jean," appeared in the New York magazine *Gems of Poetry* in January of 1884, and Johnson published several other poems there before it collapsed in 1885.[385] Although Johnson in many ways concentrated on her poetry during this time, it was a low-key pursuit for her, subordinated, in her family's eyes at least, to finding a husband. This situation changed with the death of Johnson's father in February of 1884 from complications following several brutal, partisan assaults related to his tribal job stopping timber theft and bootlegging on the Grand River Reserve. Suddenly, the family's financial situation was in turmoil. Upon George's death, his government income ceased, and both the Indian Superintendent and the Confederacy Council refused to grant Emily Johnson a widow's pension.[386] The family moved to a duplex in Brantford in 1885, where Pauline's historically minded sister Eva took a job at the office of the Indian Superintendent.[387] Thoughts of marriage seemingly on hold, Johnson began contributing to her family's survival by publishing her work

[384] Ibid., 227.
[385] Keller, *Pauline*, 43.
[386] Ibid., 42; *Strong*-Boag and Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*, 48.
[387] Keller, *Pauline*, 42.

in newspapers and periodicals.[388] Although poetry had entered Johnson's life through her mother as a marker of class, it was the family's fall from paternal prosperity that called forth Johnson's talent.

In the meantime, Johnson's love for performance had been simmering. While Johnson's parents tolerated her interest in the form of amateur theatricals performed at home, her mother balked at her desire to perform on stage as an actress, which was not a respectable career at the time.[389] Aware of her family's disapproval, Johnson took her pursuits to Hamilton, where her brother Allen lived, and joined the Hamilton Dramatic Society for amateur actors.[390] During this period of her life, Johnson also traveled locally, participating in a few historical commemorations, such as the Brantford celebration of Mohawk Joseph Brant and the politically and spiritually significant Buffalo, New York reburial of the Seneca orator Red Jacket and other Six Nations chiefs.[391] Johnson also remained attentive to the larger field of poetry, sending her poems to John Greenleaf Whittier at Christmas of 1890. Perhaps she chose Whittier because, like her mother's family, he was a Quaker and a known supporter of women writers. Whittier replied with both praise and insult, calling Johnson's career a "splendid opportunity" and professing it "fitting that one of their own race should sing the songs of the Mohawk and Iroquois in the English tongue," while also comparing her poems to the songs of Indian schoolchildren.[392] A year later, Johnson sent Whittier a birthday telegram with the message, "'Your young Mohawk

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[388] Strong-Boag and Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*, 50; Paula Bernat Bennett, *Poets in the Public Sphere: The Emancipatory Project of American Women's Poetry, 1800-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 103. The Toronto journal *The Week* published Johnson's poem "The Sea Queen" on 16 April 1885. Charles G.D. Roberts, the former editor of the journal wrote to Johnson in response to the poem, beginning a lifelong friendship. In the next two years, *The Week* published six more of Johnson's poems, including "A Cry from an Indian Wife" on June 18, 1885.

[389] Strong-Boag and Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*, 51; Keller, *Pauline*, 34.

[390] Ibid., 45.

[391] For more on Red Jacket's reburial, see Lauren Grewe, "'To Bid His People Rise': Political Renewal and Spiritual Contests at Red Jacket's Reburial," *Native American and Indigenous Studies* 1 no. 2 (2014): 44-68.

[392] Keller, *Pauline*, 51-52.

friend asks for you to-day the Great Spirit's blessing.'"[393] Johnson continued to write poetry and seek publication where she could in anthologies, newspapers, and magazines, but these publications were hardly life-sustaining.[394] Johnson would have to change strategies if she were to make a living by her poetic talent, and performances like the historical commemorations in Brantford and Buffalo would illuminate her path.

In 1892, Johnson's Brantford connections came to the rescue. A young Canadian nationalist, Frank Yeigh, found her poems and recalled Johnson's performances from his school days in Brantford. He asked Johnson to participate in a literary evening in Toronto, where Johnson recited "A Cry from an Indian Wife," a poem based on the Riel Rebellion of 1885.[395] At the end of the poem, the audience broke into applause and demanded an encore, which Johnson provided in the form of "As Red Men Die," which she claimed was based on one of her grandfather's legends.[396] With this performance, Johnson became a recitalist and Yeigh her manager, a situation to which her family acquiesced with the understanding that it would last only long enough to fund the publication of a book of her poetry.[397]

Being a recitalist was decidedly of a different nature than being an actress. Nonetheless, it was still a scandalous career choice for Johnson, as it entailed collaborating with and traveling unsupervised with men in the form of managers and fellow actors.[398] Yeigh soon paired Johnson with Owen Alexander Smily, a young English pianist, singer-composer, elocutionist,

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[393] John A. Pollard, *John Greenleaf Whittier: Friend of Man* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1969), 490.
[394] Keller, *Pauline*, 55-56.
[395] Ibid., 56-58.
[396] Ibid., 58.
[397] Ibid., 60-61.
[398] Ibid., 61; Johnson can be read in the vein of a group of New Women who, beginning in the 1880s and continuing into the 1920s, advocated for better education, work, equal marriage, health, and fashion reform for women around the world. Strong-Boag and Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*, 59.

ventriloquist, and impersonator.[399] Through working with Smily, Johnson learned the trade of the elocutionist, and the partners came to depend on each other—although not romantically or sexually as far as is known—as they traveled the country.[400] Their programs alternated between music hall performances by Smily and poems and one short prose piece by Johnson, ending in a group performance.[401] Audience favorites were "The Song My Paddle Sings," "Ojistoh," "A Cry from an Indian Wife," "The Sea Queen," "The Firs," and "As Red Men Die."[402] As early as fall of 1892, Johnson began performing "A Red Girl's Reasoning" as the prose piece of the performance, which she eventually rewrote into a "playlet" for herself and Smily concerning "the conflict between an Indian girl and a blond, blue-eyed Englishman" and added to the finale of their performance.[403]

In 1894, Johnson set off for London to publish her first book of poems. To gain name recognition in London and thus entrance to publishing houses, Johnson decided to give recitals, for which purpose she carried letters of introduction to members of London's high society from elites she had met on tour in Canada. Lord Ripon, former viceroy of India and Britain's colonial secretary at the time, became Johnson's patron during this trip, and he invited her to recite at a dinner party, which was a success.[404] Johnson wrote of the party to O'Brien:

> I talked politics and Constitution and told them there was *no* government existing save the confederated government of the Iroquois, that Hiawatha was the only statesman who ever solved the problem of perfect government, and economy—They were delighted,

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[399] Keller, *Pauline*, 66-67.
[400] Ibid., 67-68. Keller suggests, "Smily was probably not even remotely interested in Pauline or any other woman; events in his later career suggest that he was a homosexual" (68).
[401] Ibid., 69.
[402] Ibid., 69-70.
[403] Ibid., 70; More about the playlet can be found in Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2011) and in Strong-Boag and Gerson's *Padding Her Own Canoe*. Francis mentions the playlet in the context of Johnson's "need to satisfy the demands of a White audience," which, he argues, "stultified Pauline Johnson's development as a writer and limited her effectiveness as a spokesperson for Native people" (132). He writes that she "demanded little from her White audience beyond sentimental regret, which was easy to give" (135).
[404] Keller, *Pauline*, 77-78.

> they had got hold of something new to them. Oh! I disported myself with due credit to my country and I ate a disgracefully large dinner, and recited in the drawingroom later on, much to the detriment of my voice. The result is, however, that Lady Ripon wished me to find her an entire evening of readings, so it seems that not withstanding my dissertation on statesmanship and my unusually large appetite, that I scored a success.[405]

While Johnson presents her discussion of the Iroquois Confederation as a kind of parlor trick in her letter to O'Brien, she is in fact speaking to highly placed British colonial officials. She sits between Ripon, Britain's colonial secretary, and "Mr. Somebody—I forget his name—but he is deputy speaker of the House of Commons"—in fact, John William Mellor, deputy speaker of the House of Commons to Arthur Wellesley Peel from 1893 to 1895, and a liberal in favor of Home Rule—and tells them about the history and formation of the Six Nations.[406] While her goal is to promote her poetry and so gain an introduction to the best publishing houses in London, as she entertains she also informs them about Six Nations history and Hiawatha, of whom the guests had likely heard only through Longfellow's popular 1855 poem *The Song of Hiawatha* or one of the musical performances inspired by it.

History of the Six Nations and the Grand River Reserve in Canada

Perhaps we should not be so surprised at Johnson's ability to navigate an international high-political dinner. In his article on commemoration of the nineteenth-century Indian Wars, Michael A. Elliott finds that the political position of many American Indians is a seemingly uncomfortable allegiance to multiple nation-states. American Indians, like the Mohawks in Johnson's day, have become renowned for their military service to the United States while maintaining their allegiances to their tribal nations.[407] Nevertheless, traditional American poetry

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[405] Ibid., 78-79.

[406] Ibid., 78; *Dod's Parliamentary Companion* (London: Whittaker & Co, 1896).

[407] Michael A. Elliott, "Indian Patriots on Last Stand Hill," *American Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (2006): 991; From the time of Jay's Treaty of 1794, which settled ongoing territorial disputes between the United States and Great Britain, some of the First Nations on or near the border have claimed the status of independent nations with rights to free

criticism has long assumed the stability of international borders in claiming an American exceptionalism for poetic production as well as international relations, a history that transnational American literary scholars have been working to correct. Canadian literary scholars have done something similar in protesting the misclassification of Johnson as an American Indian writer.

Yet Johnson's poetry necessarily crossed borders and even oceans in her quest for fame and financial stability. Moreover, Johnson herself often crossed these borders with her performances, as her forays into the Dakotas, Minnesota, Michigan, and the U.S. Chautauqua circuit show. While Johnson insisted on her Canadianness in places like Winnipeg, she changed her self-presentation and repertoire to appeal to the audiences she found in Indian Territory or rural Illinois, which had different local histories of relations to indigenous peoples. Rather than insisting that Johnson's nationalist or patriotic identification be a stable factor in her performance, we should acknowledge that the varied contexts of her performance share their roots in the kind of travel and patriotism that indigenous peoples of the Six Nations had been performing for centuries in the form of war and diplomacy with neighboring tribal nations and colonial powers. Moreover, changing our thinking from nationalism to transnational border-crossing can help poetry scholars account for the truly bewildering amount of indigenous poetry found in newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets across the United States and Canada at this time.[408]

The Mohawk and other First Nations had a history of dealings with the British that complicated their national status after Canadian Confederation. Allies of the French, then the

passage across the international border. J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 79.

[408] See, for a sample, Robert Dale Parker's anthology, *Changing Is Not Vanishing: A Collection of American Indian Poetry to 1930*, ed. Robert Dale Parker (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

British, the Six Nations for many years played these powers off against each other in the pursuit of their own interests.[409] Following the French and Indian War came the Peace of Paris of 1763 and the Royal Proclamation. The Proclamation stipulated that settlers could not buy Indian land or settle on it; if Indians wanted to sell land, they could only sell it to Great Britain.[410] This was generally beneficial to indigenous nations as it stopped white developers from purchasing lands from unrepresentative Indians and then using colonial legislatures to protect the land and settlers.[411] The Six Nations Confederacy Council, however, diverged as a result of the American Revolution war, with one council based in Onondaga, New York and the other in Grand River, Ontario.[412] The Mohawk were particularly influenced by their family ties to William Johnson, superintendent of Indian affairs for the Northern Department for Britain after 1755 and namesake to E. Pauline Johnson's family. Mohawk leader Joseph Brant's sister Molly Brant was married to Johnson, which further cemented Mohawk ties to Great Britain.[413] Additionally, the American settlers were threatening to the Mohawks because of their eagerness for farming and thus land, rather than trading as the French had done for many years.[414]

The Grand River territory, amounting to nearly a million acres on both sides of the Grand River near Brantford, Ontario, was acquired by the Crown from the Mississauga and given to the Six Nations under the Haldimand Deed of 1784 as compensation for their homelands in what is now New York State, which the British surrendered to the Americans during the 1783 Treaty of Versailles.[415] The Six Nations who moved to the Grand River developed public celebrations to

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[409] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 63-67.
[410] Ibid., 73.
[411] Ibid.
[412] Monture, *We Share Our Matters*, xii.
[413] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 76.
[414] Ibid.
[415] Ibid., 77; Monture, *We Share Our Matters*, xii; One chief reprimanded a British official for this move, saying: "'The King surely would not pretend to give the Americans that which was not his to give; and would not believe

mark their alliance with the British in the form of Queen Victoria's birthday, which became known as "Bread and Cheese Day." It involved commemorations of the Six Nations role in the Revolutionary War and War of 1812 and ended with reaffirmations of loyalty to Great Britain.[416] Despite these demonstrations of loyalty, when Six Nations chiefs appealed to the colonial secretary in London in 1889 about land rights, he referred them back to the less sympathetic Canadian government.[417]

The Six Nations fought with the British in the Niagara peninsula in the War of 1812. Again, Great Britain did not protect its Indian allies in the Treaty of Ghent, failing to procure a territory south of the lower lakes as an "Indian buffer state."[418] Settlers moved into Upper Canada, causing a shift in Indian policy from alliance to assimilation.[419] Starting in 1818, the government also began acquiring indigenous land through annuities instead of lump-sum payments, meaning that indigenous peoples were indirectly funding the purchase price of their own lands.[420] From the sale of these lands between 1830 and 1853, the Grand River Six Nations became the wealthiest band in Canada during the nineteenth century.[421]

With these land sales, the government consolidated and controlled Indians on reserves, where they were subject to proselytization, education, and agricultural instruction.[422] The Anglican Church was well established among the Mohawk at Grand River, as Johnson's family

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that the Americans would accept that which the King had not power to give. They were allies of the King, not subjects; and would not submit to such treatment.'" Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 77.

[416] Sally M. Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Grand River Reserve in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries, 1875-1945," in *Aboriginal Ontario: Historical Perspectives on the First Nations*, ed. Edward S. Rogers and Donald B. Smith (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1994), 220.

[417] Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Grand River Reserve," 232.

[418] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 86-87.

[419] Ibid., 92.

[420] Ibid., 92-93.

[421] Sally M. Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Consolidation of the Grand River Reserve in the Mid-Nineteenth Century, 1847-1875," in *Aboriginal Ontario: Historical Perspectives on the First Nations*, ed. Edward S. Rogers and Donald B. Smith (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1994), 182.

[422] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 99-100.

history demonstrates.[423] In 1833, the Mohawk Institute received its first boarders from the Six Nations reserve, signaling the larger move to residential institutions that was to happen across Canada in the 1840s.[424] Controlling sexuality, particularly that of indigenous women, was a large part of the education at these schools.[425]

> In 1850, Canada passed its first acts defining "Indians" as:
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> > persons of Indian blood, reputed to belong to the particular Body or Tribe of Indians interested in such lands and their descendents [sic]…persons intermarried with any such Indians and residing amongst them, and the descendents of all such persons…persons residing among such Indians, whose parents on either side were or are Indians of such Body and Tribe, or entitled to be considered as such: And…persons adopted in infancy by any such Indians, and residing in the village or upon the lands of such Tribe or Body of Indians and their Descendents.[426]

This legislation was enacted by a settler government that claimed authority over indigenous nations that, according to the British government at the time, they did not possess, particularly to define who was or was not a member of an indigenous tribal nation or "band," as they were called.[427] Next, the settler government enacted the Gradual Civilization Act. This act allowed certain debt-free, educated individuals of "good moral character" to lose their Indian status, become full citizens, and gain twenty hectares of land.[428] The Six Nations Council at Grand River protested the Act for its removal of the chiefs' exclusive right to determine band

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[423] Ibid., 100; In Brantford, the New England Company, an English non-denominational missionary organization established an Indian school in 1829 which became known as the Mohawk Institute. There, students were instructed in English, with girls trained for domesticity and boys for mechanical labor and agriculture. Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Consolidation," 197-98.

[424] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 105.

[425] Barman, "Taming Aboriginal Sexuality," 286.

[426] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 109.

[427] Bonita Lawrence, "Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview," *Hypatia* 18, no. 2 (2003): 7.

[428] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 110-111; Within a year of the act's passage, three Mohawk men applied for enfranchisement; however, all but one was rejected because of debts and non-reserve residence. Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Consolidation," 199-200; Miller similarly notes that only one Indian was enfranchised between 1857 and 1876. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 114.

membership and for its threat to the reserve's land base.[429] In addition to national laws, the Council occasionally had to fight local attempts to turn reserve land into regular townships in Brant County, with the accompanying franchise and taxing responsibilities.[430]

As Britain transferred its responsibility for Indian affairs to the Canadian legislature, the Grand River Council would continue to resist local and intratribal attempts to determine tribal government in the form of elected councils and citizenship rules.[431] Johnson's grandfather and father, Chief John "Smoke" Johnson and George H.M. Johnson, were the Mohawk half of a delegation charged with arguing against these changes.[432] The 1869 Gradual Enfranchisement Act took this Canadian interference a step further by establishing that an Indian woman who married a non-Indian would lose her Indian status, as well as that of her offspring, thus losing qualifications for annuities and band membership, and adding a requirement that an Indian be at least one-quarter Indian blood.[433] By 1876, this requirement would change to "pure Indian," a

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[429] Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Consolidation," 200.

[430] Ibid.

[431] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 111. Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Consolidation," 201.

[432] Ibid., 202; Although elected councils did not occur, the Canadian government appointed a new Indian superintendent who proposed the establishment of ad hoc committees for dealing with routine issues and an executive committee for administration, both of which failed. Ibid., 202-203, 205-206.

[433] Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 114; Lawrence, "Gender, Race," 7, 9; Establishing oneself as a status Indian meant proving one was related, through the male line, to individuals who were already status Indians. An effect of this legislation was that by 1985, Canada had rendered two-thirds of all Native people in Canada landless because only status Indians could live on an Indian reserve and take part in the communities established there. Ibid.,6. It was not until the passing of Bill C-31 in 1985 (which was only passed after Sandra Lovelace took her case to the UN Human Rights Committee, which found Canada to be in violation of the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights) that the individuals who had lost their Indian status and that of their children had the opportunity to regain it, creating approximately 100,000 more Indians by 1995. C-31 has since caused friction within some indigenous communities, particularly on the lines of gender as communities had become accustomed to state-controlled means of regulating access to indigenous lands and services. Jo-Anne Fiske explains that because of C-31, "salient distinctions now exist between three socio-legal categories of Indians and band members—differences that generate unequal entitlement to valued resources and to special treatment under federal law." Moreover, tension has arisen between women's organizations, which "have consistently argued that total removal of sexual discrimination from the Indian Act should take precedence over self-determination" and band leaders, mostly men, who have "internalized and institutionalized" state imposed definitions of Indianness and political formations and fear that changes to band membership rules will undermine their sovereignty. Jo-Anne Fiske, "Political Status of Native Indian Women: Contradictory Implications of Canadian State Policy," in *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Aboriginal Women's History in Canada*, ed. Mary-Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 341; 352, 353.

status often determined by lifestyle, language, and residence.[434] The Six Nations at Grand River ignored this law, assigning land to the families of Mohawk women who had married white men.[435] The 1869 act also bestowed Indian status on white women who married status Indians, presumably including Johnson's mother Emily Howells, although it is significant that the Six Nations at Grand River seems to have rebelled against this provision as well in denying Emily a widow's pension.[436] When some Six Nations chiefs protested these acts, the Canadian government maintained its position that these acts applied to the Six Nations, regardless of their sovereign status.[437]

With the Franchise Act of 1885, adult Indian males with property in eastern Canada gained the right to vote in federal elections without losing Indian status. Nevertheless, the Grand River chiefs, suspicious of ulterior motives, advised the people against voting or attending political meetings.[438] The danger of federal enfranchisement, from the perspective of the Chiefs, was that people would question why Indians could vote federally but not locally, thus undermining the political structure of the Confederacy Council government.[439] This right was revoked, however, when the Six Nations voters did turn out and elected a Conservative candidate to the riding district.[440] Within the Six Nations, the "Dehorner movement" exacerbated the

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[434] Lawrence, "Gender, Race," 9-10.
[435] Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Consolidation," 185.
[436] Lawrence, "Gender, Race," 8.
[437] Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Consolidation," 207; By 1861, half the Confederacy Chiefs at Grand River were Christian, with little conflict, although "striking contrasts," between those who observed the longhouse traditions and those who attended church. Ibid., 185. The upper tribes, the Mohawk, Tuscarora, and Oneida, were for the most part Christian during the nineteenth century, with the "lower end" referring to the mostly Longhouse-observing area of the reserve. Clans were matrilineal and chiefs were appointed by clan matrons. Many people observed variations of both traditions. Monture, *We Share Our Matters*, 65. The conflict arose from differences over governmental structure, with the lower tribes preferring a traditional form of governance, and the upper tribes preferring reform. Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Grand River Reserve," 213. By the 1880s, the split between the Christian and Longhouse chiefs on the Confederacy Council became more acute, with the lower nations objecting to the modifications to council procedures. Ibid., 233.
[438] Ibid., 235.
[439] Ibid., 238.
[440] Ibid.

already-existing rift between the upper and lower nations of the Confederacy by advocating again for an elected system of tribal governance to replace hereditary chiefdoms.[441] Continuing these efforts, the "Progressive Warriors" petitioned the federal government in 1894 to establish an elected council on the reserve.[442] This group would organize again in 1906 as the Indians Rights Association, petitioning the tribal and federal governments again and again for an elected council. The Canadian government responded, however, that the movement needed two-thirds support from the Six Nations people, and the Indians Rights Association members were not popular within the community.[443] In response to these calls for change, the more traditional Longhouse-observant Onondaga and Seneca chiefs retrenched by reintroducing former council practices, such as opening the meetings with white wampum.[444]

BECOMING AN AUTHOR AND A POET: THE BOOK HISTORY OF *THE WHITE WAMPUM* AND *LEGENDS OF VANCOUVER*

Upon arriving in London, Johnson set about using her connections to publish her first book of poetry. She took a locally and horribly mistyped manuscript to the English critic Clement Scott upon recommendation from Professor Clark of Trinity University, and Scott "scribbled a line of recommendation to John Lane," a London publisher.[445] Lane reprimanded Johnson for the ugly state of her manuscript, supposedly expostulating, "how would this look in the British Museum labelled, *Original Manuscript of Miss Johnson's First Book*?" but nevertheless accepted the manuscript, stating, "I would not dare…to refuse anything that

[441] Monture, *We Share Our Matters*.
[442] Weaver, "The Iroquois: The Grand River Reserve," 238-39.
[443] Ibid., 243.
[444] Ibid., 239.
[445] E. Pauline Johnson, "How to Secure a Publisher," in *Buckskin & Broadcloth: A Celebration of E. Pauline Johnson—Tekahionwake, 1861-1913*, ed. Sheila M.F. Johnston (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 1997), 122.

Clement Scott recommended."[446] Just as Johnson was arriving for the first time in London with the goal of publishing her first book of poetry, the Bodley Head publishing company, which had accepted her book, was breaking up. John Lane, whose interests were in Naturalist fiction, feminism, and eroticism, directed the publication of Johnson's first book of poetry after the split under the Bodley Head imprint.[447] Johnson's contract likely provided for shared expenses and a royalty on the number of volumes sold, usually ten percent of the selling price.[448] As editor, John Davidson, according to a contemporary "one of the most brilliant poets of the late nineteenth century" with a great capacity for both damnation and praise, selected the poems to include and edited the final book. *The White Wampum* appeared in July 1895 and sold for five shillings as a limited edition.[449] It was published simultaneously by the Bodley Head of London, Copp, Clark Company of Toronto, and Lamson Wolffe and Company of Boston, with plates prepared by the Bodley Head, as a way to protect copyright in North America, although there is some disagreement about the specific printing arrangements.[450] The majority of the poems had been published before in either *Saturday Night* or *The Week*.[451] Although *The White Wampum* was critically successful and enhanced Johnson's public image, it was not financially sustaining.[452]

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[446] Ibid.

[447] Margaret D. Stetz and Mark Samuels Lasner, *England in the 1890s: Literary Publishing at the Bodley Head* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990), viii-ix. Lane's partner, Elkin Mathews, would go on to publish John Masefield, W.B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, Bliss Carman, J.M. Synge, Lord Dunsany, and James Joyce. Keller, *Pauline*, 85.

[448] Ibid.

[449] Linda E. Quirk, "E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake): A Descriptive Bibliography" (master's thesis, University of Toronto, 2005), 10, 14.

[450] Keller, *Pauline*, 85. Quirk, "E. Pauline Johnson," 11.

[451] Quirk, "E. Pauline Johnson," 15. According to the "Chronological List of Johnson's Writings" produced by Gerson and Strong-Boag, of the 36 poems included in *The White Wampum*, 20 were previously published in *Saturday Night*, 6 were published in *The Week*, and 8 more were published in a variety of venues such as *Outing*, *Canadian Magazine*, and *Belford's Magazine*. Ibid.

[452] Ibid.; Evidence of *The White Wampum*'s use and popularity at the time, however, is apparent in the copy of the first edition formerly owned by Charles Canniff James (1863-1916), who wrote *A Bibliography of Canadian Poetry (English)*, which was published by W. Briggs in 1899 and based on the author's own collection of about four hundred volumes and pamphlets, now residing in the Victoria University Library Ibid., 17, n. 14.

By the publication of *The White Wampum*, Johnson had written and published almost two-thirds of her lifetime output of around 165 poems, either in this book or in serials.[453] Although poetry was a popular and regular component of magazines and newspapers at the time, it was often uncompensated, or at least unremunerated, labor.[454]

The Week began in December 1883 as a moderate liberal, intellectual, and nationalist Toronto weekly printed by Blackett Robinson. Just over a decade later, it collapsed.[455] Edmund E. Sheppard founded *Saturday Night* in Toronto in 1887 as a 15 x 20-inch weekly paper that sold for five cents and claimed an initial circulation of 10,000. It published on literature and current topics, and originally was marketed to office workers for Sunday reading. Johnson became one of the magazine's most prolific early contributors, publishing 52 poems while Sheppard was editor and appearing in the first of *Saturday Night*'s special Christmas issues in 1888.[456] While the magazine was not solely directed at women, it devoted more attention to women's issues than most of its contemporaries.[457] Magazines such as *Saturday Night* and *The Week* took advantage of the enthusiasm for Canadian national cultural magazines following Confederation, an interest that diminished in the early twentieth century only to be revived in magazines after World War I. In addition to Johnson, *Toronto Saturday Night* included Canadian authors Stephen Leacock,

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453 Gerson and Strong-Boag, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*, xix, quoted in Quirk, "E. Pauline Johnson," 15.
454 Ibid., 16. See Hector Willoughby Charlesworth, *Candid Chronicles: Leaves from the Note Book of a Canadian Journalist* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1925), 96, in which he recalls that he paid only $3 for Johnson's "The Song My Paddle Sings" at a time when it was not customary at least in Canada for editors to pay for poetry at all.
455 Fraser Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines, 1789-1989* (Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1989), 30-32.
456 Suzanne Bowness, "Saturday Night: Canada's Oldest General Interest Magazine," *Historical Perspectives on Canadian Publishing*, accessed April 30, 2017, http://digitalcollections.mcmaster.ca/hpcanpub/case-study/saturday-night-canada-s-oldest-general-interest-magazine. Two years before founding *Saturday Night*, Sheppard was editor and publisher of the *Toronto News* and was sued for libel by the 65th Regiment of Montreal for a story about the officers' alleged sympathy for Louis Riel. The result was that Sheppard was forbidden from editing another daily newspaper in Canada, so he sold the *News* and began the weekly *Saturday Night*. Ibid; Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic*, 85.
457 Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic*, 83.

Johnson's friend and eventual editor of *The Week* Charles G.D. Roberts, Goldwin Smith, Archibald Lampman, and William Wilfred Campbell. Since *Toronto Saturday Night* and other Canadian magazines like it had to compete against more popular, imported American consumer magazines throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they also bought the Canadian rights to publish authors such as H. Rider Haggard, Wilkie Collins, Emile Zola, W.E. Norris, and Thomas Hardy.[458] *The Week* proclaimed itself on par with the great periodicals of its day and published Canadian writers such as John Reade, William Douw Lighthall, William Dawson LeSueur, Archibald Lampman, W. Bliss Carman, Agnes Maude Machar, and Louisa Murray.[459] Despite its patriotism, the periodical also included American writer Joaquin Miller, "Poet of the Sierras," and Scottish poet and journalist Charles Mackay.[460]

Poems originally published in periodicals like *Saturday Night* and *The Week*, which ended up in *The White Wampum*, also were reprinted in Anglophone newspapers internationally, from Canada to the United States to London. Often, these reprintings shadowed Johnson's tours, reflecting her writings on local cultures and history as she performed around Canada and the United States. "Shadow River," for instance, was picked up from its initial publication in *Saturday Night* on 20 July 1889 and reprinted by *The Prospector* in Lilooet, BC in May and October of 1903. Indian-themed poems were also popularly reprinted, sometimes as part of reviews of *The White Wampum* and sometimes as reflections of local interest in Indian history. "The Cattle Thief" was reprinted in *The Academy* in London on August 17, 1895 as part of a review of *The White Wampum*, which had just been published. Similarly, a fragment from "A Cry from an Indian Wife," originally published in *The Week* on 18 June 1885, was reprinted in

[458] Morris Wolfe, *A Saturday Night Scrapbook* (Toronto: New Press, 1973), 1.
[459] Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic*, 31.
[460] Sandra Martin and Sonia Sarfati, "Magazines," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, last modified December 16, 2013, http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/magazines/

the *Detroit Free Press* on February 5, 1887 and then in May of 1897 in *The National Review* of London as part of a review of Canadian poetry.

Johnson's attendance at historical commemorations also factored in her early publishing history. In fall of 1884, Johnson attended a reburial of Red Jacket in the Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo, New York, undertaken by the Buffalo Historical Society. For the occasion, which included the re-burial of several other Six Nations leaders, Johnson wrote the poem "The Re-interment of Red Jacket," which was included in a pamphlet documenting the commemoration published by the Buffalo Historical Society next to a poem by Walt Whitman, "Red Jacket, From Aloft." Although only a fragment of "The Re-interment of Red Jacket" is included in *The White Wampum,* it is powerfully placed as an epigraph for the book and a reminder of her family's investment in its production. The poem was not reprinted in full until Gerson and Strong-Boag's 2002 collection of Johnson's poetry, but was reprinted in part in *The Watchman and Southron* of Sumter, South Carolina on March 7, 1894 as part of an article titled "An Indian Poetess"; later as part of an article, "An Iroquois Poet," on July 27, 1906 in *T.P.'s Weekly* of London; and as late as September of 1912, in *The Bookman* of London, in a section called "The Reader" that also included "The Song My Paddle Sings" and "Happy Hunting Grounds."

Similarly, a fragment of "Brant, A Memorial Ode," Johnson's poetic commemoration of Joseph Brant for nearby Brantford, Canada, was reprinted by the *Detroit Free Press,* with the source cited as a souvenir broadside printed on October 8, 1886 from the commemorative event, which Johnson attended. Much as American poets relied on the British periodical press for recognition and approbation of their literary traditions, so Canadian authors like Johnson may have used American reprinting of their work to gain authorial renown.[461] American resistance to

[461] Meredith McGill, "Introduction: The Traffic in Poems" in *The Traffic in Poems: Nineteenth-Century Poetry and Transatlantic Exchange*, ed. Meredith L. McGill (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 4.

international copyright measures meant that Canadian poetry could be freely reprinted in the United States in both books and periodicals, with publishers returning indirect payments to popular authors, who were mostly British. While Johnson likely had no control over which poems American periodicals reprinted, she was able to incorporate the praise and renown that often accompanied these reprintings into the advertisements and other ephemera surrounding her performances.

The long tradition of "dying Indian" poems by poets such as Felicia Hemans, Mary Howitt, Frances Kemble, Eliza Cook, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow impacted Johnson's reprisal of those poetic forms from the ballad to the ode, no less than it had Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's and Simon Pokagon's poetry before her.[462] Early in her career, Johnson took the opportunity to promote her work by writing some of these stereotypical poems about indigenous peoples. However, instead of vanishing, dead or dying Indians, Johnson writes about reappearing Indians, as she herself appears on stage as living proof of indigenous resurgence. Johnson transforms poetic traditions by associating herself, a new Indian poet, with the commemorated indigenous leaders of the past. At the end of the nineteenth century, poetry was integral to many civic cultural and historical events. As the older generations of the Johnson family died, Pauline and her sister Eva became participants in these ceremonies by historical societies and towns eager to associate themselves with the indigenous history that the Johnson family represented. Johnson, however, did not just repeat the generic "vanishing Indian" poetic forms of the past. Rather, she manipulated old western forms like the ballad and the ode to assert her own presence as a Mohawk poet.

[462] For more on the dying Indian poems in the British tradition, see Kate Flint, "Is the Native an American?" in *The Traffic in Poems: Nineteenth-Century Poetry and Transatlantic Exchange*, ed. Meredith L. McGill (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008).

Johnson's more classically English lyrical work from *The White Wampum* was also reprinted from its original magazine venues. "In the Shadows" appears to have been especially popular from its first appearance in *The Week* on September 17, 1885 to its reprinting on September 28, 1889 in London's *The Athenaeum* as part of a review of *Songs of the Great Dominion* before traveling back across the Atlantic to *The North American* in Philadelphia on October 26, 1889. The poem subsequently reappears in *The Almonte Gazette* on November 11, 1898 in Ontario. Its final publication is a fragment found in *The Bookman* in January of 1914 as part of an article on "New Poetry."

The poem "Re-Voyage" was also picked up by *The Washington Times* as part of a short story by Madge Robertson called "In a Canoe Camp" on September 9, 1894, after being first published in *The Independent* of New York City on July 2, 1891 and reprinted in the *Brantford Expositor* on July 18, 1891. This poem was part of Johnson's series of sexually explicit, romantic poems of the late 1880s and 1890s, which often appear in conjunction with her articles about her canoe and canoeing trips.[463] According to Walter McRaye, the addressee of "Re-Voyage" was one of Johnson's old sweethearts, who often paddled on the Grand River with her when they were young.[464] Her biographers hypothesize that her lover from the late 1880s left her for England and that this personal motivation affected Johnson's desire to travel to London to publish her first book of poems.[465] "Re-Voyage" is among the most sexually explicit of Johnson's poems, with the woman's gaze combining with her mastery of the canoe to assert her sexual desire.

[463] Strong-Boag and Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*, 140.
[464] Ibid.
[465] Ibid., 142.

Poems like "Moon-Set" and "The Vagabonds" found respective homes in Reynoldsville, Pennsylvania's *The Star* on November 28, 1894 after being published in *Outing Magazine* in October of 1894, and in *The Salt Lake Herald* on October 13, 1897 after appearing in Stedman's *Victorian Anthology* in 1895 and *Saturday Night* on May 9, 1891.

Although Davidson selected and then edited the poems contained in *The White Wampum*, Johnson had some say in the physical format of her book, if mostly through her choice of publisher. Closer analysis of two books, one from early in her career, *The White Wampum*, and one at the end of her life, *Legends of Vancouver*, suggests how the physical format of the book might have spoken to different genres, audiences, and literary marketplaces. By choosing the Bodley Head to publish *The White Wampum*, Johnson participated in the literary style of London in the 1890s, particularly the *Yellow Book* and its readers' passion for the new and risqué.[466] *The White Wampum* was a limited edition printed, according to bibliographer Linda Quirk, by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co. in London and Edinburgh, although distributed by Canadian and American publishers who were listed on the title page as a way to protect the London copyright. Standard editions for Lane were between 350 and 600 copies, and this was likely also the case with *The White Wampum*.[467] Probably only a few hundred copies of *The White Wampum* were printed, in contrast to the at least 20,000 copies of *Legends of Vancouver* printed at the end of Johnson's life.[468] It is unclear whether Johnson distributed copies of *The White Wampum*, which was light and portable at only 88 pages (with sixteen pages of advertisements for other books from the publisher), at her public performances around Canada and the United States. She left

[466] Annie Garland Foster, *The Mohawk Princess: Being Some Account of the Life of Tekahionwake (E. Pauline Johnson)* (Vancouver: Lions Gate Publishing Company, 1931), 48.
[467] Linda Quirk, "Labour of Love: *Legends of Vancouver* and the Unique Publishing Enterprise that Wrote E. Pauline Johnson into Canadian Literary History," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada* 47, no. 2 (2009): 203
[468] Ibid., 204.

London before the book's printing in July of 1895, but copies were also distributed by publishing contacts in Toronto and Boston, meaning that both Canadian and American audiences presumably had access to the book.[469] Such independent book selling by authors, particularly minority authors, was common at the time, a habit of, for example, Sojourner Truth, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, and Simon Pokagon. The book, particularly the relatively small book, thus can be understood as a target format for Johnson early in her career because it helped commercialize her performances. It also contains, and even features, some of her most popular poems to perform, and thus cannot be read in its early life without taking into account the lecture circuit through which Johnson made her living. In order to understand the genre of poetry, sometimes scholars have to move away from the poems themselves and ask how people have used it in conjunction with broader practices both literary and social. With *The White Wampum*, Johnson brought together different genres of poetry like the ballad and the lyric with stylistic concerns about the physical format of the book as part of a coordinated artistic performance.

Although there is no evidence that Johnson signed her books at this stage, she would develop the practice by the time *Legends of Vancouver* was published, when she was even more reliant on personal connections made on past lecture circuits to sell copies of her book from her hospital bed in Vancouver. Unlike her first book of poetry, *The White Wampum*, Johnson's first book of Indian legends, *Legends of Vancouver*, went through many different editions as the writer aged and required more funds for health care. An edition printed in 1914, just a year after her death, includes a picture of Johnson in full Indian costume, with a note in her handwriting, "Yours Faithfully E. Pauline Johnson." This handwritten note to readers printed in *Legends of*

[469] The Metropolitan Museum of Art contains a poster by 1890s artist Ethel Reed advertising the sale of *The White Wampum* by E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake) by Lamson, Wolffe & Co, Publishers and Importers in Boston and New York City. Ethel Reed, "The White Wampum by E. Pauline Johnson," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, accessed April 30, 2017, http://metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/339244

Vancouver alludes to the numerous copies of the book Johnson signed in response to book requests from her fans. Along with support from Vancouver friends, these book sales made it possible for Johnson to continue receiving health care when breast cancer made it impossible for her to perform and sometimes even write. Her old acting partner Walter McRaye bought copies of the second editions, which he had Johnson sign and sold by mail order and word of mouth for $2.00 each. Many fans wrote letters to Johnson enclosing money for these signed copies.[470] One such fan, E. Culver, writing on July 15, 1912, notes, "We have seen each other at different times in different places, of course you were on the platform, while I helped to swell the audience, which did not amount to much seeing that I only weigh 122 lb, nevertheless I was there." This reader goes on to recount the times she "had the pleasure of hearing you" during the winter of 1903-4 in Manitoba and "since then I have rolled around the country & like the Rolling Stone, I have not gathered much moss & I suppose some day I shall roll a little too far & roll off the earth." She says, "I always make enough to pay my way & help a friend in need & my only regret, is, that I wish I could turn this $2.00 into 2000, but under the circumstance I cannot do it." She hopes for Johnson's recovery while admitting, "Sympathy is poor stuff to live on according to my experience when I landed once in Liverpool without a cent, while on my way home to warm & sunny Kent."[471] As such letters demonstrate, *Legends of Vancouver* really began with a problem: how to finance Johnson's care through her own literary writing at a time when she was so ill she often could not write even to support herself. A group of friends from the Vancouver Women's Press Club, the Women's Canadian Club, and several politicians and editors stepped in

[470] Quirk, "E. Pauline Johnson," 28.
[471] E. Culver, "Letter to E. Pauline Johnson, July 15, 1912," McMaster Archives, Hamilton, Canada.

to form the Pauline Johnson Trust and publish a selection of her Squamish legends in book form to finance the dying author's health care.[472]

The book history behind *Legends of Vancouver*, however, like *The White Wampum*, begins not in Canada but in London. There, in 1906, Johnson first met Chief Joe Capilano of the Squamish, while Johnson was trying to establish a publishing base and the leaders of several indigenous coastal nations in British Columbia were gathering to appeal to the king. In addition to Capilano, the chiefs included Chief Charlie Filpaynem of the Cowichans, Chief Basil of the Bonapartes, and an interpreter named Simon Pierre or August of the Coquitlams. For years, settlers had been encroaching on their lands, but recently new game and fishing laws had placed restrictions on indigenous hunting and fishing rights, directly threatening their nations' food supply.[473] A friend and patron of Johnson's, Lord Strathcona, asked for her help with the chiefs, who had refused to leave until granted an audience with the king. Johnson, who only understood a bit of Chinook, the trading language of the West Coast, agreed to speak to the chiefs. With this gesture, Johnson formed a friendship with Capilano that would later come in handy when she decided to settle permanently in Vancouver.[474] After the chiefs gained an audience with the king, who promised to fix the land issue eventually, they met again with Johnson, who wished them a safe journey home.[475]

Johnson was in London to explore new markets for her writing, which in this period predominantly took the form of short stories and narratives. During her stay, the *Daily Express* published three of her articles, of which "A Pagan in St. Paul's" was the most popular [476] She

[472] Quirk, "E. Pauline Johnson," 27.
[473] Keller, *Pauline*, 220; Since these tribes had never signed treaties with either the provincial or federal government in Canada, they reasoned that they could only appeal to the king. Ibid.
[474] Ibid., 221.
[475] Ibid., 223.
[476] Ibid., 216.

returned to touring in 1907, but continued to think about a way to support herself without the physical rigors of full-time touring. Publishers solicited short stories and articles, which she wrote in a day or two, but that was not enough income.[477] In April of 1907, Johnson returned to London, presumably again to seek an alternative to touring full-time. [478] Johnson had enjoyed some success as a short story and article writer, publishing in *Mother's Magazine* and *The Boy's World*, but such publications limited her to niche publishing fields.[479] She thought that true success meant staying in London, since British publishers lost interest in her work upon her return to Canada.[480] But Johnson failed to place her work in British publications during her visit or in the following years.[481]

Resigned, Johnson returned to North America to perform on United States Chautauqua summer circuits with her then-partner Walter McRaye. After a summer enduring the demeaning attitudes of American Midwesterners towards Indians, Johnson snapped at a reporter in Boston: "'Ah, I understand that look,' she told him. 'You're going to say I'm not like other Indians, that I'm not representative. That's not strange. Cultivate an Indian, let him show his aptness and you Americans say he is an exception. Let a bad quality crop out and you stamp him as an Indian immediately.'"[482] Disaster struck the tour again and again, as trains broke down and storms left the performance areas muddy. Johnson wrote of the effects of the Chautauqua tour on her health to her friend Ernest Thompson Seton:

> A heathen Chautauqua manager, in that most heathen state Missouri, placed us in a huge circus tent to give the recital. A thunder storm blew up soaking the canvas, then the torrid sun teemed down. The tent steamed, filled with vapour, the [thermometer] at 98 degrees and—well! My throat went. For nine days I did not speak aloud, and had every joint in

[477] Ibid., 226.
[478] Ibid., 230.
[479] Ibid.
[480] Ibid., 230-231.
[481] Ibid., 231.
[482] Ibid., 235.

> my body swollen and scarlet with rheumatism…. Nine nights cancelled, at fifty dollars a night. Just a loss of $450.00 at one fell swoop…. And it was for this I came from England![483]

Although Johnson seldom referred to her Chautauqua tour during interviews and never wrote about it later, it seems that she was not fond of this American tour. At her final appearance in Bloomfield, Iowa, Johnson wrote to Archie Morton that she and McRaye "have been working like nailers on our trip, matinees and evening performances almost daily."[484]

After this awful year, Johnson checked into the Hotel Vancouver and decided to visit Chief Joe Capilano on the North Shore. He gave her a light canoe to paddle around in during her stay.[485] This decision to visit her friend would direct her literary output for the remainder of her life, and it would also cause a decided shift in her use of genre, from lyric to legend. She began publishing versions of legends told to her by Capilano and his family in magazines like *Mother's Magazine* in January of 1909.[486] In the meantime, Johnson decided that Vancouver, with its three newspapers, suited her for retirement. She made plans to scale back performances, but was persuaded by McRaye to delay retirement by a year.[487]

Johnson moved into an apartment on Howe St. in the West End of Vancouver where Capilano would visit her. She describes that they often sat in silence for a long time, which Capilano would break by saying, "'You would like to know this?' and then launching into a 'wondrous tale, full of strange wild poetry—the kind of folklore which soon will be heard no longer.'"[488] She writes in her foreword to *Legends of Vancouver* that Capilano assured her that

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[483] Charlotte Gray, *Flint and Feather: The Life and Times of E. Pauline Johnson, Tekahionwake* (Toronto: Harper Canada, 2002), 344.
[484] Ibid.
[485] Keller, *Pauline*, 237-238.
[486] Ibid., 238.
[487] Ibid., 239-240.
[488] Ibid., 246.

the legends contained therein "had never been revealed to any other English-speaking person save myself."[489] At this time, Capilano was about sixty and dying of tuberculosis, lending a pressing element to their encounters.[490] Although Johnson filters the stories in *Legends of Vancouver* through the paradigm of salvage ethnography or the idea that indigenous peoples were in danger of "disappearing" with their knowledge and cultural artifacts, the Boasian revolution in anthropology was in full swing at this time. In fact, Franz Boas worked in the Pacific Northwest in the 1880s before Johnson's arrival and generated a progressive shift from scientific racialism in the early twentieth century. Johnson's stance ignores these developments in anthropology, instead placing herself as the recipient and transmitter of Capilano's tribal knowledge, which was also carefully maintained through tribal and familial traditions and customs passed from generation to generation. Johnson herself was in no state to be the only recipient of such knowledge. She had inoperable breast cancer at the time when that meant a painful and imminent death. Promoted through women's and journalism groups, the book, rather than helping Capilano's tribal nation, would help Johnson through her own extended illness and hospital care at the end of her life.

When, in Christmas of 1909, Johnson realized that Capilano's legends would attract a good readership in a West Coast journal, she published them in Lionel Makovski's *Vancouver Province*.[491] These stories were not recorded with what anthropologists would call ethnographic accuracy, and they were not the same as the versions told among the Coast Salish or Squamish people themselves, which is perhaps not surprising.[492] This may, as some have argued, be due to Johnson's inability to understand Capilano's mixture of Chinook and English. But it could also

[489] E. Pauline Johnson, *Legends of Vancouver* (Toronto: McClelland, Goodchild and Stewart, 1911), vii.
[490] Keller, *Pauline*, 246.
[491] Ibid., 249.
[492] Ibid., 250.

be a feature of Johnson's poetic license. As her first book *The White Wampum* shows, Johnson insisted on putting her own mark on her publications. Published over fifteen years apart, however, this poetic license read differently in the stories of *Legends of Vancouver* and the poetry of *The White Wampum*.

A Verse-Wampum for her Parents: Readings of *The White Wampum*

With the release of *The White Wampum* in July 1895, Johnson demonstrated for the first time in book form how, through poetry, she performed aesthetics and her particular expression of Native and gender politics. By examining the choices she made in building her artistic career, we can learn about the possibilities and limitations of Native poetry at this time and about poetry more generally in this period. At the time of *The White Wampum*'s publication, Johnson's father had been dead for just over ten years. Nevertheless, George H.M. Johnson remains a strong force in his daughter's first book of poetry. Johnson's choice of epigraph, selected from her early poem "The Re-interment of Red Jacket," honors her indigenous heritage through her father. The quotation reads: "And few to-day remain; / But copper-tinted face and smouldering fire / Of wilder life, were left me by my sire / To be my proudest claim."[493] With this quotation, Johnson participates in the colonial blood logic of the time and associates indigeneity with atavistic imagery of a "smouldering fire" and "wilder life." Moreover, she prepares her audience to attribute aspects of her performed personality—her fieriness and wildness—to her indigenous heritage along with the phenotypical attributes of her "copper-tinted face."

By using the word "sire" to describe her father, Johnson also hints at other poetic inheritances, Whittier and Burns. With this word, Johnson connects her poetic and literary

[493] E. Pauline Johnson, *The White Wampum* (Boston: Lamson, Wolffe and Co., 1895).

inheritance to the demands placed upon her as a middle-class woman and youngest daughter who was meant to acquire just enough literary accomplishment and education to secure a marriage proposal—which she did not do. From a literary-historical perspective, Johnson's use of "sire" is a window onto the way that poetry is an act of reproduction for her, freighted with a desire to participate in a set of literary traditions, both indigenous and western. Through her engagement with poetry, Johnson also attempts to navigate her relationship with parents who admired writing, despised acting, and insisted on maintaining a middle-class lifestyle. Johnson's own decision to adopt New Woman values was a way to maintain her status as a middle-class woman, in the face of her profession and family's fall in class status after her father's death.

The inscription at the front of *The White Wampum* brings together western and indigenous mediums by comparing the "songs" of the poet to the "wampums" of the Six Nations. Johnson argues that both are "chiseled alike from that which is the purest of his possessions, woven alike with meaning into belt and book, fraught alike with the corresponding message of peace, the breathing of tradition, the value of more than coin, and the seal of fellowship with all men."[494] From a Mohawk tribal perspective, this inscription makes reference to the *Kaienerekowa*, the Great Law of Peace as spread by Peacemaker, as well as the *Tekeni Teiohatatie Kahswentha*, or Two Row Wampum belt. Mohawk scholar Rick Monture calls the Two Row Wampum belt the "philosophical foundation" of the Haudenosaunee's political relationship to Europeans.[495] Wampum belts are formed from woven strands of white and purple or black tubular beads made from whelk and quahog claimshells or freshwater mussel shells originally strung on hemp cords.[496] For the Haudenosaunee, one function of wampum belts is to

[494] Johnson, *The White Wampum*.
[495] Monture, *We Share Our Matters*, 13.
[496] Penelope Myrtle Kelsey, *Reading the Wampum: Essays on Hodinohso:ni Visual Code and Epistemological Recovery* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2014), xiii.

symbolize a treaty relationship between nations; they are considered to be one embodiment of "a sacred and binding agreement."[497] A more intimate function of wampum belts is the practice of using them for adoptions or ransoms. The Adoption Belt forms three purple diagonal lines of wampum on a background of white wampum, with the diagonal lines signifying "an unobstructed path, or a peaceful road of communication between…groups." [498] Johnson's family included people adopted by the Mohawk on her father's side, thus her decision to name her collection *The White Wampum* and her words "wampum-verse" perhaps speak to her family and Haudenosaunee history of selecting outsiders for adoption when that suits communal interests. Harriet Maxwell Converse, perhaps obtaining this information from Johnson herself, declared that ransom belts "could save a life if presented by the youngest unmarried female in the family." Johnson happened to be just such a person, and contained in *The White Wampum* is a poem that describes such a scenario.[499]

In Haudenosaunee oral traditions, wampum originated from Hiawatha's grief at the death of his three daughters and wife to illness and accident. As he lay on the beach wanting to die, a flock of birds that had been floating on the lake flew away, and the force of all these wings cleared the water from the lake and revealed the wampum shells on the lake's floor. Hiawatha picked up these shells and strung them onto cord, as he repeated to himself, "This would I do if I found anyone burdened with grief even as I am. I would take these shell strings in my hand and console them. The strings would become words and lift away the darkness with which they are covered. Holding these in my hand, my words would be true." The wampum string's consolation allowed Hiawatha to recover from the loss of his family and serve as a speaker for the

[497] Monture, *We Share Our Matters*, 14.
[498] Kelsey, *Reading the Wampum*, 85-86.
[499] Marc Shell, *Wampum and the Origins of American Money* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 42.

Peacemaker and unify the Haudenosaunee nations into the Iroquois Confederacy. Adopted by the Haudenosaunee peoples, this method of grieving replaced the need for a "mourning war" or the taking of captives.[500] The form of the wampum belt gives sanction to the information it contains through its spiritual power, as the shell is considered the sacred medium given by the creator to transmit information across generations. Wampum was also a gendered art form. Women wove wampum based on the words of male messengers and leaders. Reading wampum belts was a performative and social event, often undertaken to commemorate a treaty.[501] Wampum-verse becomes a Haudenosaunee-English genre for Johnson, allowing her to mourn her father's death through healing, true words. The format of a pamphlet or small book is also perhaps a choice guided by the wampum symbolism as a portable, material emblem of the relationship between herself and her audience. It would have been easily transported and sold at performances. Following Jerome McGann's interpretation of Stephen Crane's *The Black Riders* as black letters on the page, Johnson's *The White Wampum* forms a more complicated pivot to modernism with her white wampum. The inscription at the beginning of *The White Wampum* notifies the audience that as an indigenous poet Johnson understands and can weave together both western and indigenous sacred mediums. Reading this inscription in conjunction with her allusion to her family in the epigraph will help us understand how Johnson melded her knowledge of indigenous media practices with the technology of the book to create a new kind of indigenous poetry with *The White Wampum*--one that addressed her struggles as a poet with kinship relations, career choices, and religion.

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[500] Kelsey, *Reading the Wampum*, xiii-xiv.

[501] Neal B. Keating, *Iroquois Art, Power, and History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 90-94; Richard W. Hill Sr., "Regenerating Identity: Repatriation and the Indian Frame of Mind," in *The Future of the Past: Archaeologists, Native Americans, and Repatriation*, ed. Tamara L. Bray (New York: Garland Publishing, 2001), 131.

The rest of Johnson's inscription is a dedication to her parents, as well as a grappling with their spirits, even as it is a declaration of her ability to make her own decisions about her career, life, and body. She rhetorically presents *The White Wampum* to her parents, writing, "So I do offer this belt of verse-wampum to those two who have taught me most of its spirit—my Mother, whose encouragement has been my mainstay in its weaving; my Father, whose feet have long since wandered to the Happy Hunting Grounds."[502] In this moment, Johnson positions herself as a diplomat between her career and her parents, or perhaps between her parents themselves. Her mother's encouragement is vital to the writing of her poetry, the "mainstay in its weaving." With this detail, Johnson establishes her matrilineal inheritance of a relationship to indigenous forms through her English mother. Weaving and wampum traditionally are part of Iroquois women's aesthetic expression, and it was her mother who encouraged Johnson's choice of the poetic genre.

Why would Johnson offer a peace belt to her parents? Politically, after all, wampum belts are symbolic of agreements between nations. Johnson's career was consistently marred by familial conflict over her choice of profession. Johnson's mother Emily never approved of her career as a performer, finding it too close to acting, and her sister Eva often voiced her disapproval of Pauline's life choices (and supposedly burned many of Johnson's papers after her death). The poems contained in *The White Wampum*, reframed as wampum, weave her family together in their expectations of each other. With her much-anticipated first book (which was also the culmination of a promise to her family that she would quit her stage career), Johnson insists on her personal sovereignty and control over her sexuality. Johnson's decision to *publish The White Wampum* could be seen as an example of what Scott Richard Lyons calls rhetorical

[502] Johnson, *The White Wampum*.

sovereignty.[503] The choices Johnson made about her career had implications for her reputation and that of her family. Johnson recognizes her family's stake in her career with *The White Wampum*, yet refuses to hew to her family's visions of her even as she weaves her own verse-wampum across generational boundaries. With *The White Wampum* and its verse-wampum, Johnson claims her own aesthetic genre as a single poet-performer rather than obeying the traditional form of marriageable poet-author that her parents have insisted on her following as a well-bred, middle-class, and, at least nominally, Anglican woman.

As a management of her parents' expectations for herself and her career, *The White Wampum* mirrors the structure of the Two Row Wampum, in which "parallel lines represent two vessels, the Haudenosaunee and the European, traveling side by side down a river…As these two vessels coexist, they are to be considered separate but equal in status, never interfering in each other's social or political affairs" and so reflecting "principles of sharing and cooperation."[504] During Johnson's lifetime, wampum strings and belts served many uses, cementing the bonds of nations and individuals, serving as sacred pledges, binding promises of marriage through wampum chains and belts exchanged between lovers, certifying the reliability and good faith of a messenger. In effect, wampum "cemented friendships, confirmed alliances, sealed treaties, and effectually effaced the memory of injuries."[505] Wampum also had ceremonial use. The Haudenosaunee hung a string of white wampum around the neck of a white dog, which they suspended to a pole for sacrifice. The wampum pledged their sincerity, while the white color was "an emblem of purity and of faith."[506] Similarly, white wampum was also used during public

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[503] Scott Richard Lyons, "Rhetorical Sovereignty: What Do American Indians Want from Writing?" *College Composition and Communication* 51, no. 3 (Feb. 2000): 447-468.
[504] Monture, *We Share Our Matters*, 14.
[505] Ashbel Woodward, *Wampum: A Paper Presented to the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia* (Albany: J. Munsell, 1878), 24-25.
[506] Ibid., 36.

confessions during which the white wampum string was passed from person to person as they confessed. The wampum "recorded their words and gave their pledge of sincerity," thus functioning again as a kind of sacred seal.[507] By naming her first book *The White Wampum*, Johnson presents readers with her credentials and assures her authority as its writer.

The White Wampum ranges from indigenous to settler-themed poetry and more conventionally romantic English-themed poetry. Nevertheless, the literary influences throughout are those of the late nineteenth-century literary culture surrounding Johnson, from ballads inspired by Burns to epics inspired by Longfellow and Whittier. While at the end of *The White Wampum*, Johnson presents the kind of genteel poetry expected of her as a young, marriageable middle-class woman, she often adds indigenous elements and a hint of scandal that counteract that expectation.

The section of Indian-themed poetry which begins *The White Wampum* opens with the dramatic declaration: "I am Ojistoh, I am she, the wife / Of him whose name breathes bravery and life / And courage to the tribe that calls him chief. / I am Ojistoh, his white star, and he / Is land, and lake, and sky—and soul to me."[508] With the first lines of "Ojistoh," Johnson shocks her readers—and audiences attending live renditions—by assertively, dramatically declaring her identity as an indigenous woman. The declaration was accompanied on the stage by Johnson's presence and inventive costume, which borrowed from many indigenous traditions and made her appear indigenous but not tribal. Using the conventions of romantic love—he is "land, and lake, and sky," and his "name breathes bravery and life / And courage"—Johnson aligns her identity with nature, courage, and bravery, associations her character will prove by actions at the poem's end. The Hurons, seeking revenge against her Mohawk husband, approach Ojistoh with a

[507] Ibid., 37.
[508] Johnson, *The White Wampum*, 1.

"bribe." They ask, "'Would I consent / To take of wealth? be queen of all their tribe? / Have wampum ermine?'"[509] Ojistoh, however, rejects the Huron attempts to assimilate her into their tribe. She says, "Back I flung the bribe / Into their teeth, and said, 'While I have life / Know this—Ojistoh is the Mohawk's wife.'"[510] At this the Hurons abduct her and fling her on the back of a pony, the most hated Huron man "sneering," "'Thus, fair Ojistoh, we avenge our dead.'"[511]

The Huron man takes her toward the Huron camp, and the clever Ojistoh develops a plan for her escape. Bound close to the Huron, Ojistoh notes, "I smiled, and laid my cheek against his back: / 'Loose thou my hands,' I said. 'This pace let slack. / Forget we now that thou and I are foes. / I like thee well, and wish to clasp thee close; / I like the courage of thine eye and brow; / *I like thee better than my Mohawk now.*'"[512] The Huron man responds by cutting her bonds and slowing the pony, believing Ojistoh's professions of love for him. She continues the deceit, winding her arms about his waist and to his belt where she finds his knife in her "burning palm."[513] Distracting the Huron enemy by caressing his cheek, Ojistoh draws the knife with the other hand. She recounts, "'I love you, love you,' / I whispered, 'love you as my life.' / And—buried in his back his scalping knife."[514] In performances, Johnson emphasized Ojistoh's violent act with her father's knife. Johnson as Ojistoh is no helpless—or sexually ignorant—maiden of a ballad. She defends her right to determine her kinship and alliances with a combination of sexuality and violence facilitated by her own father's knife.

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[509] Ibid., 2.
[510] Ibid.
[511] Ibid.
[512] Ibid., 3.
[513] Ibid.
[514] Ibid.

The last stanza begins with a triumphant, "Ha!" as Ojistoh returns, "Mad with sudden freedom, mad with haste, / Back to my Mohawk, and my home."[515] In this stanza, much of the imagery of her captivity reverses itself through repetition. We have the same images of "a sea wind" chasing, the horse "lashed" to "foam" and the "Plunging thro' creek and river, bush and trail" as "On, on" this time Ojistoh alone "galloped like a northern gale," and "nearer, nearer" she came to her "distant Mohawk's fires aflame" instead of Huron fires.[516] All of this imagery mirrors that of Ojistoh's initial capture by the Hurons. To this imagery, Johnson adds at the end of the poem a reflection of joy, presumably pronounced as Ojistoh returns to her people covered in their enemy's blood. She concludes, "My hands all wet, stained with a life's red dye, / But pure my soul, pure as those stars on high— / 'My Mohawk's pure white star, Ojistoh, still am I.'"[517] With Ojistoh's final declaration, Johnson performatively warns her readers that she will determine her own story, profession, kinship affiliations, and alliances, using whatever means available to her as a woman and a poet. Covered in the blood of one who would have assimilated her without consent into a different tribal nation and story, Johnson as Ojistoh asserts that her soul is pure—a word at this time associated with women's sexuality and more applicable to a docile mother than to an unrepentant killer—and remains loyal to her Mohawk husband.

As this reading of "Ojistoh" demonstrates, although the Indian-themed poetry with which Johnson begins *The White Wampum* at first appears to draw only from the indigenous part of her heritage, in fact these poems have much in common with popular Scottish and English ballads. This turn toward English and European traditions of poetic meter and line can also be seen in popular American poets like Longfellow and Whittier. This form "idealized Native women and

[515] Ibid.
[516] Ibid.
[517] Ibid.

men" in a way similar to the ballads common in the Scottish and English poetry Johnson read and memorized as a child.[518] As a woman raised with aristocratic pretensions, Johnson would have likely heard or, more likely, read popular Scottish and English folksongs about adventure and lost love as well, popular topics during the nineteenth century throughout the Anglophone world. Indeed, many of the plots are similar, from the doomed interracial romance of "The Pilot of the Plains" to the suffering of poor folk, particularly indigenous women, in the midst of colonialism and intertribal war in "The Cattle Thief," "A Cry from an Indian Wife," and "Dawendine." The poem "Wolverine" marks an interesting turning point, as it is a kind of ballad about an indigenous man, Wolverine, helping a white trapper and being killed for it, told around the fireside by that very trapper. "The Vagabonds" continues this form of direct address, as an older speaker accuses crows of stealing memories from him or her, absolving them of their thefts if they have flown over his or her homeland.

The next section of poems in *The White Wampum* includes settler-themed poems of agriculture and working life as well as love poems. A representative of this section, "Joe: An Etching," reverses the stereotype of the drunken Indian to present the drunken technology of western property enclosure. In this poem, Johnson describes the scene:

> A Meadow brown; across the yonder edge
> A zigzag fence is ambling; here a wedge
> Of underbush has cleft its course in twain,
> Till where beyond it staggers up again;
> The long, grey rails stretch in a broken line
> Their ragged length of rough, split forest pine,
> And in their zigzag tottering have reeled
> In drunken efforts to enclose the field,
> Which carries on its breast, September born,
> A patch of rustling, yellow, Indian corn.[519]

[518] Veronica Strong-Boag, "'A Red Girl's Reasoning': E. Pauline Johnson Constructs the Nation Nation," in *Painting the Maple: Essays on Race, Gender, and the Construction of Canada*, ed. Veronica Strong-Boag, Sherrill Grace, Avigail Eisenberg, and Joan Anderson (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006), 138.
[519] Johnson, *The White Wampum*, 48.

The fence stumbles through the native landscape, the rails reeling in their "drunken efforts to enclose the field" of corn. In this image, all attempts to border or delimit are drunken failures. The process of agricultural demarcating is not complete; instead, as we will see with the forenamed boy Joe she describes, it produces things that defy categorization, like Johnson's poetry. With *The White Wampum*, Johnson refuses the impulse to limit herself to either Mohawk or English traditions—she and her poetry are both. The wood of the rails and liquor imagery may also allude to another part of her family's history—her father's brutal beatings, received as he defended the Grand River reserve's timber from thieves and protected the reserve from bootleggers. These injuries led to her father's death and the family's financial downfall.

Johnson describes the titular Irish settler boy Joe as "A little semi-savage boy of nine" who, "perched upon / The topmost rail," sits "dozing in the warmth of Nature's wine."[520] Although the images of inebriation continue, Joe is drunk on "Nature's wine" here, only, as Dickinson would have it, inebriate of air. The sun "kisses" his face, producing "vagrant freckles," and his brown hair is "wild" and "vagabond"[521] The boy's clothes reinforce the virtuous nature of his drunkenness, as "Barefooted, innocent of coat or vest," he tucks his hands "within their usual nest— / His breeches pockets."[522] Here Johnson imagines Joe as an innocent creature of the forest, a bird in his nest hiding fingers that are "somewhat tired and worn" from corn husking.[523] The scene is broken by "some trivial sound," which snaps Joe out of his reverie with nature, so that "with an idle whistle" he "lifts his load / And shambles home along the country road / That stretches on fringed out with stumps and weeds, / And finally unto the

[520] Ibid.
[521] Ibid.
[522] Ibid.
[523] Ibid.

backwoods leads, / Where forests wait with giant trunk and bough / The axe of pioneer, the settler's plough."[524] All of the settlers' attempts in this poem to border or delimit nature are drunken or porous, weedy or mixed. Far from sanctioning the process of settler-colonial agriculture, as Gerson and Strong-Boag argue in their reading of it, the poem suggests that process is not complete and produces unpredictable new life along the way. With "Joe: An Etching," Johnson re-characterizes the settlement process as something that inevitably produces not heterogeneous "progress" or perfect assimilation, but unexpected consequences for all participants. The settlers' lumber-stealing to make such fences may have killed Johnson's father, but her father married Emily Howells and left behind children, including a poet in Johnson.

The White Wampum ends with a poem called "My English Letter," in which the speaker describes her imaginings of England with the arrival of letters from loved ones in England. With this poem, Johnson performs the sort of homage to her English heritage through her mother that one would expect equally of her relationship to her indigenous past through her father. The combination of these relationships puts her in a category of her own, as she refuses at this stage in her career to hew to her family's visions of her and quit the recital circuit, as she had promised, after the publication of this first book of her poetry. The wampum belt she offers her parents in the form of this book of poetry proposes a rapprochement not just across racial or national boundaries, but across generational ones. By ending with a poem like "My English Letter" that dramatizes a time before she had set foot in England, as she had done to publish this very book, Johnson recalls how these promises between family members must change over time. Before traveling to London, Johnson imagined England through these letters, "English pictures" painted by "Imagination's brush."[525] Yet now that she has set foot in London and fulfilled her

[524] Ibid.
[525] Ibid., 87.

long-term goal of publishing her first book of poetry, she has to think about the limits, as well as the opportunities, posed by her family's expectations of her career.

Legends of Vancouver, Indigenous Poetry, and Ethnography in the Early Twentieth-Century Literary Marketplace

Although Johnson's *Legends of Vancouver* has often been read as a travel book, or a gathering of local curiosities for Vancouverites, a closer look at the way she frames the legends, as well as the genre of the legend itself, can tell us much about the ways in which the field of poetry as a whole, and more specifically indigenous poetry, was shifting in the early twentieth century. Johnson begins many of the legends in *Legends of Vancouver* with direct addresses to readers that illuminate anthropological cultural comparisons. Johnson begins "The Deep Waters," for example, by explaining:

> This is the Mount Ararat of the Pacific Coast peoples; for those readers who are familiar with the ways and beliefs and faiths of primitive races will agree that it is difficult to discover anywhere in the world a race that has not some story of the Deluge, which they have chronicled and localized to fit the understanding and conditions of the nation that composes their own immediate world.[526]

This framing device foreshadows the comparativist frameworks of the Boas school of cultural anthropologists, which would affect the production of indigenous writers in the early twentieth century. By comparing the Squamish people of the Pacific Coast to biblical stories of the resting place of Noah's ark in Genesis, Johnson opens a line of communication between white Christians and indigenous people.

Having established a basis for which white people, and Christians more specifically, can approach the legend "The Deep Waters," Johnson then compares the stories of different

[526] Johnson, *Legends of Vancouver*, 47.

American indigenous nations about the flood. She elevates the Squamish legends above those of the Six Nations, which she terms "childish" for the large and intelligent roles played by animals in those stories, compared to the "jealously preserved annals of the Squamish, which savour more of history than tradition."[527] The Squamish regard animals as "intelligent co-habitants of the Pacific slope" but not man's "equals, much less superiors."[528] Throughout the book, Johnson makes these intertribal comparisons between the Six Nations, presumably the Mohawk of Grand River, and the Squamish tribal nation of Joe Capilano's reserve outside of Vancouver. In the conversations with Capilano with which Johnson often frames her stories, she compares Squamish and Mohawk languages and cultural beliefs and practices. The legends often begin with these framing devices in the form of intertribal conversations. In "The Recluse," for example, Capilano asks Johnson, "What do your own tribes, those east of the great mountains, think of twin children?"[529] Johnson replies that the Squamish and the Mohawk share the belief that twin children, although rare, are bad luck. She hesitates to inform Capilano as to why, however, fearing, "If I said the wrong thing, the coming tale might die on his lips before it was born to speech."[530] With this image of stillbirth to describe the potential failed communication between herself and Capilano, Johnson positions herself as a kind of midwife to the legend, which requires intertribal communication in the form of the right words to call forth the story.

Johnson decides to reveal to Capilano that in the Six Nations twin children are like rabbits.[531] Capilano turns the question back on her, as he asks what white people think of twins, to which Johnson replies that they welcome them. Only after this intertribal communication has

[527] Ibid., 48.
[528] Ibid., 49.
[529] Ibid., 23.
[530] Ibid.
[531] Ibid.

taken place is Capilano willing to tell Johnson the legend she has been anticipating. For the Squamish people, twins are, he explains, "a fearsome thing—a sign of coming evil to the father, and, worse than that, of coming disaster to the tribe."[532] With the framing of this legend, Johnson illustrates her intertribal trading of knowledge of white and Mohawk cultures for Capilano's Squamish legends. Early anthropologists or ethnographers at this time often documented a monetary exchange, but not an exchange of information, calling their storytellers informants and giving them minimal credit for divulging their tribal stories. In *Legends of Vancouver*, however, communication is a two-way street, as Capilano expects Johnson to reciprocate information-sharing under the conditions of their intertribal friendship.

This pattern of intertribal communication found in *Legends of Vancouver* follows certain formal features. In "The Deep Waters" legend, Johnson notes for the reader, "When a Coast Indian consents to tell you a legend he will, without variation, begin it with, 'It was before the white people came.'"[533] Her emphasis on "consent" being a vital aspect of these communications, along with her insistence that this opening language was "without variation," emphasizes that the cross-cultural communications of these legends followed indigenous protocols. Stories require the consent of the storyteller, and they contain certain features that mark them as stories told to certain people at certain times. In "The Two Sisters," Johnson illustrates these framing devices with a metaphor that plays with their meaning. She recounts that Capilano's "inimitable gestures, strong, graceful, comprehensive, were like a perfectly chosen frame embracing a delicate painting, and his brooding eyes were as the light in which the picture hung."[534] Gestures—the frame in this case—matter, as do the expressions of the eyes of the

[532] Ibid., 24.
[533] Ibid., 49.
[534] Ibid., 3.

living person telling the story. Without these elements of a face-to-face interaction, the legend is an unframed, unlit painting: beautiful, perhaps, but unappreciated given its lack of display or proper lighting.

The narrative framing of "The Recluse" hints that Johnson's linking of poetry and legends had been on her mind for some time. "There was not a tree, a boulder, a dash of rapid," Johnson writes of Capilano, "upon which his glance fell which he could not link with some ancient poetic superstition."[535] The "ancient" Squamish legends that Capilano tells are here a kind of poetry, the land and nature romantically portrayed; they are the "superstition" with which Johnson identifies herself elsewhere in the book. Religion, poetry, and legends come together in this image of Capilano as reader and storyteller of Squamish land.

In two other legends, "A Squamish Legend of Napoleon" and "The Lure in Stanley Park," religion again rears its (in this case serpent's) head as a way to distinguish literary genres of other cultures. The legend of Napoleon tells of how a Squamish relic of a serpent was sent to Napoleon and helped him in his battles until he lost it right before Waterloo. Outrageous as it may seem, Johnson too had a special place in her heart for Napoleon, who was her father's only idol. Her middle name, Pauline, which Johnson chose as her first name and was shortened to Polly or Paul by friends, was her mother's concession to George to name their youngest daughter after Napoleon's sister—after years of petitioning that her brothers be named directly after Bonaparte. Perhaps it is her astonishment that Capilano guessed this family history or that indigenous peoples across the continent also admired Napoleon that makes Johnson look at him "curiously" after the story. She recounts, "he had been telling me the oddest mixture of history and superstition, of intelligence and ignorance, the most whimsically absurd, yet impressive, tale

[535] Ibid., 22.

I ever heard from Indian lips."[536] Two issues contribute to Johnson's inability to categorize the legend: one, its contemporary nature, since it decidedly occurred after white people arrived to the Coast, and two, its relation to her own father's obsession with Napoleon. Unsure whether to believe Capilano or laugh, or both, Johnson remains dumbfounded at her inability to categorize this story.

"The Lure in Stanley Park" presents a different aspect of this problem of genre for Johnson. A story of the successful containment, yet continuing power, of a witch woman turned into a stone in Stanley Park, it adds the element of a ghost story to the ethnological legend. Acknowledging this problem of genre, Johnson directly addresses her readers: "Call them fairy-tales if you wish to, they all have a reasonableness that must have originated in some mighty mind, and, better than that, they all tell of the Indian's faith in the survival of the best impulses of the human heart, and the ultimate extinction of the worst."[537] Like fairy tales, Johnson seems to argue, these stories do not have to be true to be powerful, to have "a reasonableness," and tell stories of the survival of humanity's best "impulses" and the "extinction of the worst." Again, the emphasis is on how the stories can teach morality through "reasonableness," but that morality is one that promotes "survival," particularly Squamish survival in the region.

In another legend, "The Sea-serpent," Johnson begins with a conversation about her religion. "I shall believe whatever you tell me, Chief," she states, "I am only too ready to believe. You know I come of a superstitious race, and all my association with the Pale-faces has never yet robbed me of my birthright to believe strange traditions." Capilano answers, after a pause, "You always understand." Johnson quietly replies, "'It's my heart that understands."[538] Like her

[536] Ibid., 134.
[537] Ibid., 146.
[538] Ibid., 62.

autobiographical short story about her family, in which she knows her dead parents approve of her poetry and stories that they never read, Johnson confesses that she is "only too ready to believe" without specifying her own religious creed. Instead, she appeals to her Mohawk heritage as proof of her ability, which she calls her "birthright," "to believe strange traditions." The story ends by explicitly engaging the cross-cultural possibilities of genre and form. After telling the story, Capilano "unfolded his arms, and his voice took another tone as he said, 'What do you call that story—a legend?'" Johnson answers, "The white people would call it an allegory," a genre that Capilano indicates he does not understand. After Johnson explains the literary genre of an allegory, Capilano responds, "That's right…That's what we say it means, we Squamish, that greed is evil and not clean, like the salt-chuck oluk [Sea-serpent]. That it must be stamped out amongst our people, killed by cleanliness and generosity. The boy that overcame the serpent was both these things."[539] Capilano knows that white people often call his stories "legends," not at first understanding the difference between "legend" and "allegory." But he consents to the moral aspect of the legend when Johnson explains the generic differences.

Conclusion

The relation between legend and poetry, like that between legend and allegory, was also a porous one for Johnson by the end of her life. Before she died, Johnson was planning a collection of ballads inspired by the Capilano family's Squamish legends featured in *Legends of Vancouver*. Only *The Ballad of Yaada* was published. It appeared in *Saturday Night* on August 23, 1913, shortly after Johnson's death, and was collected in her *Flint and Feather* for the second and subsequent editions.[540] Such ethnographic poems had long been a part of Johnson's

[539] Ibid., 69-70.
[540] Quirk, "E. Pauline Johnson," 62.

repertoire, from "The Bird's Lullaby" in *The White Wampum*, which was printed in *The Canadian Magazine* and reprinted in *The Almonte Gazette* of Ontario on November 11, 1898, to the related "Iroquois Lullaby," first printed in *Harper's Weekly* in September of 1896 under the header "Child Verse: Charming Bits of Prattle."[541] The poem reappeared as "Lullaby of the Iroquois" in *The Houston Daily Post* on December 13, 1896, and on February 26, 1902 in *The Western Christian Advocate* of Cincinnati, Ohio, and a decade later in *The Christian Advocate* of New York City on November 6, 1913. Whether Johnson rewrote the poem's title to appeal to increasing ethnographic interest in indigenous peoples' poetry or whether newspaper editors adapted the title to changing market interests themselves as it moved from the metropolitan publishing center of New York City to the American regions of Houston, Texas and Cincinnati, Ohio, is perhaps unknowable. *The Western Christian Advocate*'s reprinting states that their source is a publication of the Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania called "The Red Man and Helper." Johnson was published several times in this periodical, with "Lullaby of the Iroquois" printed on the front page of the Friday, July 27, 1900 edition, suggesting that her work reached American Indian venues and audiences.[542]

The salvage ethnographic work occurring at the time surely affected how Johnson collected, wrote down, and produced written versions of Capilano's Squamish stories. At this time, men like Edward Curtis and Charles Hill-Tout were scouring the Northwest Coast for indigenous artifacts and stories, particularly those they saw as representative of the pre-contact era, and publishing their "discoveries." Johnson must have been aware of these efforts at salvage ethnography, which previously had brought many anthropologists to her own home,

[541] Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic*, 98.
[542] *The Red Man and Helper* (Carlisle, PA), July 27, 1900.

Chiefswood.[543] Johnson's process of transcription even came to resemble ethnographic practices at the time because of her cancer, which made her unable to write from August to September of 1910 and forced her to dictate the legends to her editor at the Vancouver *Province* magazine, Lionel Makovski.[544] Early reviewers also responded to *Legends of Vancouver* as a new kind of literature, if not ethnography: an "imaginative treatment of Indian folklore." One reviewer suggested that the work done by Charles Hill-Tout and his like could be improved by the "congenital sympathy and poetic endowment" of Johnson's approach in *Legends of Vancouver*.[545] Literary critics have remarked upon these stories as "a new and unique hybrid genre which integrated ethnology, oral tradition, and fiction."[546] The influence this description does not acknowledge, however, is poetry, a genre Johnson explicitly links with the legends both in her metaphors and use of poems as prefaces.

What the archives tell us is that Johnson was indeed aware of ethnography, perhaps even early in her career, but definitely by the time she was writing *Legends of Vancouver*. Evidence in the McMaster University archives suggests that Johnson was reading and commenting on Six Nations ethnography, specifically an early version of Jeremiah Curtin and J.N.B. Hewitt's paper, *Seneca Fiction, Legends, and Myths*, which appeared in print in the *Thirty-Second annual report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*, which covered the period from 1910-1911 but was not published until after Johnson's death, in 1914.[547] These materials are unusual in that they appear to be an advance, typed list of the Six Nations

[543] Quirk, "E. Pauline Johnson," 25-26.
[544] Ibid.," 26.
[545] Ibid.
[546] Christine Lowella Marshall, "The Re-presented Indian: Pauline Johnson's 'Strong Race Opinion' and Other Forgotten Discourses" (dissertation, University of Arizona, 1997), 153.
[547] The William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections at McMaster University Libraries holds the Pauline Johnson fonds, which contain items such as correspondence, manuscripts, and newspaper clippings. Series 2 of the fond consists of manuscripts by Johnson and includes in File 25 five pages of "Material Collected by Jeremiah Curtin-Fiction."

stories Curtin would include in his report to the Smithsonian as "Part 1. Material Collected by Jeremiah Curtin," with Johnson's notes in both pen and pencil next to the titles and in the margins. Perhaps Johnson obtained an advance copy of Curtin's ethnographic field work recorded in the 1880s on the Cattaraugus reservation near Versailles, New York from one of Curtin's Canadian colleagues, the most likely source being J.N.J. Brown, Superintendent of the Squamish people, whom Johnson knew through the Capilanos.

Although the source of this information may remain a mystery, Johnson's annotations tell us something about how she was using Curtin's collected Seneca stories. Next to the first story, "The Sister and Her Six Elder Brothers," Johnson has written, in pencil, "—sex-hostile" and crossed out the type below the title which says "(hidden young man search to renew supply)." Her writing in the margins is often unreadable, but seems to consist mostly of notes on the plots of the stories, with the occasional intercultural reference, as in the case of "The Potent Boy," where Johnson writes, "Tom Thumb works miracles in overcoming[?] such[?] types of monsters, supers, etc." Other references include "Dreadnaught," "parody of Dreadnaught," and "creation myths?" Moreover, in her notes Johnson does not shy away from topics like defecation, sex, and a man who claims a "(boast of 2 penis)."[548]

[548] Curtin was part of the Bureau of Ethnology in Washington, D.C. at the end of the nineteenth century, a group that was focused on collecting indigenous stories for what they thought those stories could tell them about how mythologies developed in the past and so some part of the history of the development of the human mind. From his memoirs, he writes, "All myths have the same origin and run parallel up to a certain point which may be taken as the point to which the least developed peoples have risen." Under this professional banner, Curtin traveled to the Seneca Nation in New York to ask them to tell him their stories. The Seneca adopted him, after which they had a heated discussion about giving him information related to the Seneca religion. Curtin recounts, "A young man called Two Guns advised the people to have nothing to do with me. I was there to get hold of their religion and store it away as a curiosity; I would get the turkey and they would have the bones. If they told, they should not do so for less than twenty-five dollars a day." Information, at this stage has become like artifacts, sacred to indigenous peoples but part of white ethnologists' ideas of human development or history as a kind of evolutionary progression. Two Guns argues that the Seneca would get next to nothing for their stories—these outsider ethnologists would leave indigenous peoples with nothing but the bones, a poor form of nutrition. Curtin does eventually persuade a Seneca man, Solomon O'Beal, to tell him some stories. O'Beal is a son of Corn Planter and descendant of the reformer Handsome Lake, and he tells Curtin Seneca myths and traditions for two dollars a day, the Bureau's limit for indigenous informants. Curtin drained O'Beal of all his stories, then tried to move on to others, whom he describes

Johnson, too, began responding to this ethnographic shift in North American literary culture, directly, in *Legends of Vancouver*, and indirectly through her revisions of her more "ethnographic" poetry in the form of songs, ballads, and legends of particular indigenous nations and places. From the lyricism of "The Song My Paddle Sings," she moved to poems like "The Quill Worker," one of Johnson's most reprinted poems in the United States, which she included in her second book of poems, *Canadian Born*. First printed in the London magazine *Black and White*, "The Quill Worker" was widely reprinted.[549] The plot of "The Quill Worker" almost mirrors that of *The Song of Hiawatha*, but with the emphasis on Minnehaha instead of Hiawatha. Neykia, a Sioux chief's daughter, sits in the doorway of a solitary tepee and "Broiders her buckskin mantle with the quills of the porcupine." As she embroiders, she asks, "'Whence come the vague to-morrows? Where do the yesters fly? / What is beyond the border of the prairie and the sky? / Does the maid in the Land of Morning sit in the red sunshine, / Broidering her buckskin mantle with the quills of the porcupine?'" White traders visit Neykia but understand that she is being courted by "a young red hunter" who has visited "To rest and smoke with her father, tho' his eyes were on the maid; / And the moons will not be many ere she in the red

as less helpful. In the introduction to Curtin's ethnology, the editor notes a distinction between "myths and legends on the one hand and tales and stories which are related primarily for the indecent coarseness of their thought and diction on the other." Ethnologists were not just looking for any type of story: they were particular about collecting certain types of indigenous genres, most importantly "a trustworthy recital of the legendary and the poetic narratives and the sacred lore of their people," information they thought would best come from a trusted tribal elder. In making distinctions between genres of stories, Hewitt also makes class distinctions. He compares untrustworthy informants to "corner loafers and their ilk" among white people. The most valuable stories he calls "poetic narratives," alluding to a predominant, perceived relationship at that time between myth, poetic language or poetry, and culture. "The highest type of poetry," Hewitt clarifies, "expresses itself in the myth, in the *epos*, and in the *logos*." Jeremiah Curtin and J.N.B. Hewitt, "Seneca Fiction, Legends, and Myths," in *Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1910-1911* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), 59; Jeremiah Curtin, *Memoirs of Jeremiah Curtin*, ed. Joseph Schafer (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1940).

[549] "The Quill Worker" appeared in *Omaha Daily Bee* in 1898, *Willmar Tribune* in Willmar, Minnesota in May of 1899, *The Bourbon News* in Paris, Kentucky in September of 1899, *The Citizen* in Berea, Kentucky in November of 1899, *The Kinsley Graphic* in Kinsley, Kansas in December of 1899, and *The Nebraska Advertiser* in Nemaha City in February of 1900.

sunshine / Will broider his buckskin mantle with the quills of the porcupine." Again, Johnson emphasizes the traditional artistic work of many indigenous women in the embroidering of clothing with porcupine quills. Following legends, historians in the early twentieth century believed that the first Iroquois wampum were made of quills.[550] Quills were also used as invitations to guests, as a messenger carried colored quills of red, green, and white, which he distributed to the invited according to their social standing.[551] As Ella Cara Deloria explains in *Dakota Texts*, "To make things, is to do fancy work, principally [sic] with porcupine quills and beads."[552] Embroidery with quill work is typically mentioned in these stories as the gift of a woman to a lover. To make things, to create, is the work of women, and for Johnson this work resembles the work of the poet, as she weaves words and rhymes together into a meaningful pattern. This pattern speaks to and across her tribal, familial, and professional relationships as wampum, but also to her personal and romantic relationships, as quill work.

Tracing the relations between the linguistic and the biographical and publishing dimensions of Johnson's poems sheds new light on the role of Johnson's gender, family relations, and generic choices in her move from poetry to legends over the course of her literary career. Focusing on the perceived overlapping of indigenous poetry, ethnography, and legends in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gives greater dimensionality to Johnson's choices as an author and hints at new ways of understanding the place of indigenous poetry in both the Native American literary canon and the genealogy of American poetry. Johnson's generic categories, from verse-wampum to legend, create new intersections of genre and new ways of conceptualizing the relationship between form and time in American literature. With

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[550] William M. Beauchamp, *Wampum and Shell Articles Used by the New York Indians*, in *Bulletin of the New York State Museum* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1901), 339.
[551] Ibid., 348.
[552] Ella Cara Deloria, *Dakota Texts* (New York: G.E. Stechert and Co., 1932), 66.

poems as verse-wampum, Johnson renegotiates relationships with family, living and dead, while with Capilano's legends she navigates complicated generic structures as she uses the stories of another tribal nation to construct a past and a future for the new city of Vancouver.

Viewed together, Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Simon Pokagon, and E. Pauline Johnson challenge the story that American poetry progressed smoothly from sentimentalism to modernism, from manuscript to print. Schoolcraft's manuscript publications, Pokagon's literary borrowings, and Johnson's journey from poetry to legends all defy linear notions of American literary history. Creek poet Alex Posey continues these poetic innovations and regenerations, with poetry that engages with religious elegies, dialect poems, and humorously informal political verse in Indian Territory newspapers. Drawing on both western and Creek literary forms, Posey rewrote the American religious elegy as a skeptic and drew upon his own family history to bridge longstanding divides within the Creek Nation. His early and sudden death placed his legacy in the hands of his wife Minnie, and she made editorial choices that continue to affect Posey's reputation as a poet today. Revisiting Posey's poetry and illuminating Minnie's editorial changes forges a new path, through Posey, from early twentieth century Native American poetry to the poetic innovations of the mid-to-late twentieth-century Native American Renaissance.

Chapter 4: "Thy genius shaped a dream into a deed": The Poetry and Politics of Alex Posey

INTRODUCTION

The poetry of Alexander Posey centered around Indian Territory politics and life. Yet Posey's work departed from the models of earlier indigenous North American poets—the private poetry of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, or the performative works of Simon Pokagon and E. Pauline Johnson. While Johnson traveled to London to publish her first book of poems and gained some international renown by the end of her life, Posey remained engaged with the local politics of Indian Territory during his lifetime. Posey sought publication for his poems in newspapers and magazines in Indian Territory, seemingly content with obtaining a local audience for his work.

As a writer, Posey never shied away from the often divisive and dangerous politics of the Creek Nation during allotment and the future of Indian Territory more generally. Immediately after college, he sought election as a representative for his mother's town of Tuskegee in the House of Warriors. During that 1895 election year, Posey allied himself with Isparhecher, the former head of the anti-constitutional faction in the Green Peace War, who was running for principal chief of the Creek Nation. Posey gave a slippery speech at Isparhecher's political rally, in which he both declared that "the history of the white man's dealings with the Indian is a history of broken treaties and of unfulfilled promises" and called on Creeks to "Trust to the honesty of the United States and stand by the man who will protect and guard the interests of the people—Such a man is Isparhecher, the patriot, statesman and warrior." This speech illustrates the difficulty of discerning Posey's politics, especially regarding the Creek Nation's relationship with the United States government.

Posey's work for the Dawes Commission and subsequent career as a real estate agent facilitating the sale of so-called surplus Creek allotments has cast a shadow over his literary legacy, seen by Creek people as a betrayal of his people and possible cause of his untimely death by drowning.[553] This work, however, also explains Posey's continued fascination in his poetry and other writings with the Creek conservatives who opposed land allotment in the name of tribal sovereignty. As interpreter for the Dawes Commission, Posey met the famous leader of the conservative Snake faction, Chitto Harjo, who gave commissioners a cool reception. "I shall never hold up my right arm and swear that I take my allotment land in good faith," he declared, "not while water flows and grass grows."[554] After meeting many conservative Creeks, Posey reflected in his journal, "What a pity that there is no newspaper published in the Creek language for the benefit of the fullbloods! The lack of such a paper has been the cause of all the misunderstandings between government and ward."[555] This communication problem between conservative and progressive Creeks is an issue that Posey continually revisited and reflected upon in his poetry. His elegies to conservative Creek leaders and Creek dialect poems bridged the gap in understanding between conservative and progressive Creeks. In this way, Posey's poems were vital to the imagination of a future for Creek citizens.

Posey was the product of a family that worked across political divides within the Creek Nation between Upper and Lower Creeks. For his parents, romantic love conquered even the most trenchant of political divides. Posey's poem for his wife, "Lowena," his pet name for Minnie, celebrates romantic love's power to overcome obstacles. The first stanza reads: "Blue

[553] Craig S. Womack, *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).
[554] Alexander Posey, *Lost Creeks: Collected Journals*, ed. Matthew Wynn Sivils (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 128-129.
[555] Ibid., 132.

hills between us lie / And rivers broad and deep; / But here, as there, a bird / Is singing me to sleep / And love has bridged the mountains blue / And all the streams between us two."[556] His family background gave Posey a unique perspective on the issues that would further divide the Creek Nation during his lifetime: progressive and conservative social agendas, the division of tribal annuities and funds, claims against the United States, law enforcement, the adoption of the freedmen (former Creek slaves, many of whom had intermarried with tribal citizens), the development of railroads and frontier towns in Indian Territory, and American trespassing on Creek lands. [557]

During Posey's lifetime, the Creek Nation faced the daunting possibility that the General Allotment Act of 1887, better known as the Dawes Act, whose provisions they had been exempted from, would be applied to their nation, their lands allotted, and tribal titles dissolved. On March 3, 1893, Congress established a Dawes Commission to negotiate with tribal nations to secure the abrogation of the treaties, dissolve tribal titles, liquidate tribal assets, and allot lands in severalty. The Creek National Council opposed this action, calling statehood "common robbery" and arguing that allotment would disadvantage uneducated and conservative Creek citizens.[558]

As a Creek citizen and newspaperman, Posey worked through this crisis in his poems and publications. Several of his poems directly address allotment, such as "O, Oblivion!" in which Posey bemoans, "Congress never meets but there is seated / From thy dark abode some politician / With a bill anent the demolition / Of our Indian governments, and gets in / Print, like Curtis and the well-named Dennis Flynn." The poem ends ironically: "But Dawes will make thee

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[556] Alexander Lawrence Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche: Collected Poems*, ed. Matthew Wynn Sivils (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 90.
[557] Daniel F. Littlefield, *Alex Posey: Creek Poet, Journalist, and Humorist* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 29-30.
[558] Alexia Kosminder, *Tricky Tribal Discourse: The Poetry, Short Stories, and Fus Fixico Letters of Creek Writer Alex Posey* (Moscow: University of Idaho, 1998), 14.

restitution, / Though he violates the Constitution!"[559] Another poem, "Ye Men of Dawes," begins, "Ye men of Dawes, avaunt! / Return from whence ye came!" The poem ends defiantly, "But ye can't lead us in / To any such a sin / As giving aid to ye / To sanctify a wrong— / Gives robbery chastity!"[560] In a satire of Hamlet's famous soliloquy, Posey posed the allotment question: "To allot, or not to allot, that is the / Question," ending the poem, "To allot, divide, / Perchance to end in statehood; / Ah, there's the rub!"[561] Although Posey eventually favored what he saw as the progressive change that allotments would bring to Indian Territory, he continually questioned the federal government's motivations, as allotment was a convenient way to redistribute land to white settlers and enact statehood without the consent of the tribal nations.[562] Posey's poem, "The Squatter's Fence," pokes fun at the poorly made fences of the white squatters on Indian land while voicing a serious concern about Creek land in the face of allotment. Posey writes of the squatter: "He sets his posts so far apart / And tacks his barbed wire so slack / In haste to get the Injun land / Enclosed and squat him qui'lly down."[563] Posey's education, as we will see, placed him on the side of progressive Creeks in favor of allotment, if not of statehood, but his poems demonstrate a tendency to elegize the conservative Creeks he met when collecting Creek stories and working for the Dawes Commission.

Understanding Posey's poetry requires examining his inheritance of Creek political concerns and history. This chapter begins with an overview of that history as it concerned Posey's family and poetry. Next, the chapter traces Posey's interest in literature as he developed

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[559] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 20.
[560] Ibid., 21-22.
[561] Ibid., 26.
[562] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 73-75; Robert F. Sayre, "'A desirable citizen, a practical business man': G.W. Grayson—Creek mixed blood, nationalist, and autobiographer," in *Early Native American Writing: New Critical Essays*, ed. Helen Jaskoski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 158-59; Kosminder, *Tricky Tribal Discourse*, 14.
[563] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 45.

into a poet in his marriage to a teacher and through a close-knit group of friends who enjoyed composing and discussing literature. These connections were forged across the mediums of manuscript and print, and sometimes involved unauthorized publication. In his literary pursuits, Posey made compositional choices that refracted formal innovations of western literature through the lens of Creek genres. Posey's earliest poems incorporate legends, and he shifted towards more colloquial Creek dialect poems later. In his summers off from school, Posey interviewed his conservative Creek neighbors to learn Creek legends and stories. Posey thus simultaneously learned western and Creek literary forms, causing him to view those literary forms through each other, rather than hierarchically.

At the age of 34, Posey tragically drowned in his beloved river, the Oktahutchee or North Canadian River, and his widow Minnie was left to determine his literary legacy. Although Posey had made fair copies of many poems, his death was unexpected and he did not leave clear instructions about his literary legacy. This left Minnie in a position similar to Henry Schoolcraft's after his wife's death, with financial and familial burdens that made publishing a collection of Posey's poetry an attractive endeavor. Like Schoolcraft, Minnie also wished to preserve her husband's poetry in a way that reflected well on his young family. In preparing the book, Minnie changed several poems, crafting her own version of Posey's legacy that smoothed over Posey's complicated religious views and poems to other women.

Faced with Posey's broad engagement with western literary form, the tales told about his death, and his widow's reshaping of his legacy, the historian of American poetry must turn away from the guidance of formal innovation and national achievement to consider differently the pivotal political role of poetry in Indian Territory—long before the "Native American Renaissance" of the 1960s. That story also suggests that indictments of Posey for his complicity

with the allotment policies miss the crucial role in sustaining indigenous ways and communities that his poetry played.

At his death just after Oklahoma statehood, Posey's poetry blazed a path for American Indian poets facing tribal termination and relocation in the 1940s and 1950s. Posey's poem "Pity" was reprinted in *The Native American* in 1912 and *The Indian's Friend* in 1913 in a section called "Of and By Indians." In 1912, *The Native American* also reprinted "At the Siren's Call," a poem that Minnie Posey heavily edited. *The Indian's Friend* also reprinted "The Dew and the Bird" in 1913, and *The Indian School Journal* reprinted "What I Ask of Life" in that same year. In the decades following Posey's death and before the Native American literary Renaissance, Posey's poetry appeared several times in the Oklahoma magazine *The American Indian*. In its April 1928 issue, Prudie Patillo, a student at Posey's alma mater Bacone College, wrote an article headlined "Alexander Posey, Creek, Was Promising Poet and Satirist."[564] Patillo calls Posey "the most distinguished" of American Indian poets and artists and gives an overview of Posey's life and literary works. In this account, however, Patillo represents Posey not only as a poet but an interpreter of "the beautiful quality of Indian poetry" into the English language. She emphasizes, "From his literature we find what we have lost, the poetry of the children of God," and excerpts many poems as examples of Posey's poetical engagement with nature, injustice against American Indians, and Indian dialect. Patillo cites "The Homestead of Empire" as proof of the "thrill of a patriot's heart," since "Probably no other poet in all the world, who saw his race being slowly assimilated, his native lands taken over by an alien people, ever chanted a poem of triumph of that people as Posey did." Ending the article with Posey's tragic drowning,

[564] Prudie Patillo, "Alexander Posey, Creek, Was Promising Poet and Satirist," *The American Indian*, April 1928, 6-7, 16.

Patillo calls him the "Hiawatha of his people" and concludes, "Indian though he was, leader of his kindred, the white people pay reverent homage and praise to his memory."

Posey's poem, "Ode to Sequoyah," also appeared in *The American Indian* in May, 1930, in an article, "Sequoyah Eulogized for Invention of Cherokee Alphabet," which reports on Oklahoma's installation of a statue of Sequoyah in Statuary Hall at the Capitol in Washington, D.C.[565] The program included a reading of Posey's "Ode to Sequoyah" by Cherokee Anne Ross. In the poem, Posey's praised Sequoyah's invention of the Cherokee syllabary, which gave Cherokees a written language in which to write documents that record their histories and so ensured that their history would last beyond their civilizations. With "Ode to Sequoyah," Posey contests precisely the kind of western ideas of history and genre that allowed Charles Sprague to claim of American Indians: "Even that he lived, is for his conqueror's tongue, / By foes alone his death-song must be sung; / No chronicles but theirs shall tell / His mournful doom to future times." Instead, this writing system enables Posey to proclaim, "The people's language can not perish—nay," praising Sequoyah with the words, "Thy genius shaped a dream into a deed."

Posey's poetry lived on in Oklahoma publications over twenty years after his death, influencing poems in the former Indian Territory into the 1930s. The Creek poet Joy Harjo, born into a different political context in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1951, nevertheless built on Posey's legacy as a Creek poet facing political uncertainty in the same region. In the 1950s, American Indians again faced removal, this time in the form of relocation to urban centers like Oklahoma City, Denver, Los Angeles, and Chicago. In addition to viewing Harjo's poetry through the Native American Renaissance of the 1960s and 1970s, I argue that reading Harjo through the lens of Posey's Creek Indian Territory poetry bridges the gap between early American Indian

[565] "Sequoyah Eulogized for Invention of Cherokee Alphabet," *The American Indian*, May 1930.

poets and poets of the American Indian Renaissance to trace a legacy of American Indian poetry from the early nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries.

A Brief History of the Creek Confederacy

The Creek Nation formed as a confederation of autonomous tribal people called the Creek Confederacy organized by towns built upon streams or creeks.[566] In the eighteenth century, the Creek Confederacy occupied a large portion of the present-day states of Alabama and Georgia, bordered on the north by the Cherokee Nation, on the west by the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations, on the east by the English, and on the south by Spanish and French outposts.[567]

Townships, or *talwa/tvlwv*, organized Creek political life.[568] Towns were classified as White (Peace) towns or Red (War) towns, distinguished by a red or white stick positioned at the town and by colors painted on buildings, objects, and bodies. White towns hosted peace councils and were considered places of refuge, while red towns were responsible for military activities.[569] Distinctions between white and red towns were important but not permanent; for instance, when several red sticks gathered in a town during a war, the town could loosely be called a red town.[570] Posey's mother Nancy belonged to the peace town of Tuskegee, and his father, Hence, was a member by adoption of the Muskogee town Rekackv, known as Broken Arrow in English.[571]

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[566] Robbie Ethridge, *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 30; Angie Debo, *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979), 3.
[567] Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 3.
[568] Kosminder, *Tricky Tribal Discourse*, 11; Ethridge, *Creek Country*, 95; David Lewis Jr. and Ann T. Jordan, *Creek Indian Medicine Ways: The Enduring Power of Mvskoke Religion* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 5.
[569] Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 6-7; Lewis and Jordan, *Creek Indian Medicine Ways*, 6.
[570] Jean Chaudhuri and Joyotpaul Chaudhuri, *A Sacred Path: The Way of the Muscogee Creeks* (Los Angeles: UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 2001), 66.
[571] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 12, 15, 19.

Leadership was structured around the town unit, with titles generally consisting of a clan, town, or another town name; an official designation, such as *micco* (chief), *tustennuggee* or *emarthla* (war ranks), or *heneha* or a distinction like *harjo* (recklessly brave) as in Posey's penname Chinnubbie Harjo, *fixico* (heartless) as in his other persona Fus Fixico, or *yahola* (a ceremonial cry) the name Posey gave to his son, Yahola Irving Posey, also named after the American writer Washington Irving, who famously traveled through the West in the 1830s.[572]

Clans or *huti* linked this confederation of autonomous townships together "in ties so close that it regulated the most casual and the most intimate detail of their social intercourse."[573] Clan descent was matrilineal and matrilocal, with children belonging to and living with their mother's clan.[574] Posey's mother belonged to the Wind Clan, the most important clan in the Confederacy.[575] Many of Posey's poems feature the wind, most strikingly "The West Wind," which describes the "soft and wooing" west wind that "seems to sing a message sweet / Of peace undying."[576] Members of a clan were considered close relatives with responsibilities of hospitality and aid, and marriage within the clan was prohibited. [577] One of the worst insults to hear from a Creek person was "*esté dogo*, or 'you are nobody,' implying that you have no kin," so important were the kinship ties binding Creek people together.[578] In "Fus Harjo and Old Billy Hell," Posey highlights the importance of the clans: "Fus Harjo was not a good Creek; / The pious members of his clan / Declared his virtues all were weak."[579] In addition to this clan

[572] Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 25, 13.
[573] Ethridge, *Creek Country*, 74; Lewis and Jordan, *Creek Indian Medicine Ways*, 6; Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 14.
[574] Ibid., 15; Ethridge, *Creek Country*, 74.
[575] Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 14.
[576] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 96.
[577] Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 14.
[578] Ethridge, *Creek Country*, 109.
[579] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 191.

system, by the eighteenth century the Creek Confederacy was divided between Lower Towns on the Flint and Chattahoochee rivers, whose inhabitants frequently intermarried with European settlers and adopted European customs, and Upper Towns on the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers, whose inhabitants were more isolated from settlers and followed more traditional customs.[580]

In 1829, Andrew Jackson, known to Creeks as "Jacksa Chula Harjo, or Old Mad Jackson," from the disastrous Red Stick war fifteen year earlier, became President of the United States.[581] During those fifteen years, white settlement had ballooned, with more than 100,000 white settlers squatting on Creek land between 1810 and 1820. [582] In 1830, the United States Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, which ordered the removal of the Creek and other American Indians to lands west of the Mississippi. The Creek Confederacy refused to sign a removal treaty, but white settlers in Alabama passed punitive laws against American Indians, making them subjects but not citizens under Alabama law. Crimes against Creek people went unpunished and fake deeds to Creek lands went uncontested.[583] This situation forced the Creeks to negotiate with the United States government, resulting in the Treaty of 1832, wherein the Creek Confederacy relinquished title to all Alabama lands. Creek people were to live on select lands with the promise of land titles after five years' residence, which they were expected to sell and move west, with the help of the United States government.[584] The United States promised that these lands in the west would belong to the Creek Confederacy "as long as grass grows and the rivers run," and that no state or territory would ever have a right to pass laws for the Creek Confederacy in Indian Territory. The Indian Intercourse Act of 1834, which prohibited

[580] Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 4; Lewis and Jordan, *Creek Indian Medicine Ways*, 7-8.
[581] Ibid., 9.
[582] Ibid., 10.
[583] Ibid., 11.
[584] Ibid.; Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 13.

unauthorized access to Indian reservations, was supposed to help preserve this peace by solving the problem of illegal settlement on Creek land.[585]

Like Simon Pokagon's family, Posey's family faced removal to Indian Territory in the 1830s. While Pokagon's father allied his band with the Catholic Church to stay in Michigan, Posey's family remained in Alabama until they could sell their allotment after the required five years' residence. Under the Treaty of 1832, life in Alabama for Creek people remained dangerous, as they were never granted legal equality and violence continued between Creeks and white settlers. After one such act of violence in 1836, Jackson ordered the military forcibly to remove the Creek people west to Indian territory, resulting in the estimated death of 3,500 Creek Indians.[586] After remaining on their allotment the prescribed five years, Posey's family sold their land and removed to Indian Territory in 1838, two years after the United States military forced the main body of Upper Creeks from present-day Alabama.[587]

In Indian Territory, the Creek Nation was split over the question of slavery, which divided the Confederacy along the old wound between Upper and Lower Creeks. The Lower Creeks allied themselves with the Confederacy and the Upper Creeks with the Union.[588] Posey's parents also were divided on the issue of the Civil War. Posey's mother Nancy belonged to a pro-Union Tuskegee family that joined the leader Opothleyohola during a disastrous retreat from Confederate forces to Kansas in late 1861.[589] The Confederate Army pursued and massacred these pro-Union Creek refugees. Posey's father joined the Confederate Army, which retreated across the Red River into Texas before the end of the war. Upon returning home to Indian

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585 Lewis and Jordan, *Creek Indian Medicine Ways*, 14.
586 Ibid., 11, 14.
587 Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 13.
588 Jeffrey Burton, *Indian Territory and the United States, 1866-1906: Courts, Government, and the Movement for Oklahoma Statehood* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 6.
589 Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 15-16.

Territory after the Civil War, both sides of the Creek Nation found their property destroyed: houses burned, fields overgrown, fences fallen, and livestock and possessions stolen.[590] At the end of the Civil War, slavery was abolished, ending one cause of division between the Upper and Lower Creeks. The nation was reunified as the Muskogee Creek Nation under a written constitution.[591]

Posey's Education and Professional Development

Alexander Lawrence Posey was born in the Creek Nation in Indian Territory on August 3, 1873 near present-day Lenna, Oklahoma.[592] Over the course of Posey's life, Indian Territory moved from tribally-controlled territory to statehood with the incorporation of Oklahoma into the United States in the fall of 1907.

Posey's career as a poet was influenced by his having spent early childhood in a region called Tulledega, after the nearby hills and mountain, between the north and main branches of the Canadian River west of Eufaula on Limbo Creek.[593] Posey's father Hence was a farmer, herder, and lighthorse policeman responsible for catching cattle rustlers and bandits.[594] Alex Posey was the eldest of twelve children and recalled an idyllic childhood playing jokes on his mother Nancy.[595] A devout Baptist, Nancy told Creek stories during winter nights.[596] The Posey family moved to Bald Hill—closer to Eufaula and Nancy's Tuskegee relatives—in the mid-1880s.[597]

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[590] Ibid., 16.
[591] Ibid., 30.
[592] Ibid.,11.
[593] Ibid., 23, 20.
[594] Ibid., 32.
[595] Ibid., 24.
[596] Ibid.
[597] Ibid., 29-34.

The move to Bald Hill signaled the beginning of Posey's formal education in English. Posey's father Hence was a "self-educated man of uncommon intelligence, with a philosophical and scientific turn of mind," but he desired a more structured education for his children.[598] Although Posey understood English, he mostly spoke Creek until the age of fourteen, when his father forced him to speak only in English.[599] Posey moved to Eufaula to attend the Creek national public school, and his family shortly joined him there, opening the National Hotel.[600] At Eufaula, the editor Albert Wortham inducted Posey into the newspaper trade by employing him to print and write articles for the *Indian Journal*.[601] The newspaper was notable for its fight against railroad lobbyists, particularly since Muskogee in the Creek Nation was a strategic town for the first Indian Territory railroad.[602] In 1885, the Creek Council designated the *Indian Journal* the official paper of the Muskogee Nation, and by 1902 it attracted a readership of five thousand.[603] Posey's practical education in the newspaper business proved as important to his literary career as his formal western education.

Posey began studying at the Indian University at Bacone in November of 1889 as one of ten students selected by the Creek board of education.[604] Baptists founded the Indian University in 1880 to run as a mission based on A.C. Bacone's principle that "A Christian school planted in the midst of a people becomes one of the most powerful agencies in the work of civilization."[605] Designed to produce Native American teachers, preachers, and leaders, the Indian University's

[598] Ibid., 36.
[599] Ibid., 36-37.
[600] Ibid., 37-38.
[601] Ibid., 38.
[602] James E. Murphy and Sharon M. Murphy, *Let My People Know: American Indian Journalism, 1828-1978* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981), 47.
[603] Ibid., 48.
[604] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 41.
[605] Coeryne Bode, *The Origin and Development of Bacone College* (Tulsa: University of Tulsa, 1957), 1.

motto was "Rescue the Perishing."[606] As a student at the Indian University, Alex studied mathematics, including algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, languages such as Latin and Greek, ancient and modern history, psychology, natural philosophy, rhetoric, civil government, logic, surveying, sciences including astronomy, chemistry, zoology, and botany, and English literature. Posey praised the Indian University, calling it "one of the best institutions of this Country," but demurred, "tho' controlled by a religious denomination, to which I pay but little attention."[607]

At Bacone, Posey continued to balance his formal education with his newspaper career, setting type and writing for the *B.I.U. Instructor* after class during the week.[608] Like Johnson at the end of her career, Posey recognized literary opportunity in the demand for indigenous North American legends and stories at the turn of the twentieth century. In his publications for the *B.I.U. Instructor,* Posey experimented with verse forms from legendary poems to elegies and dialect poems. He also tried writing in the persona of Chinnubbie Harjo, a trickster figure and penname, about whom he wrote a series of tales.[609] For instance, Posey published a series of Chinnubbie Harjo stories in the *B.I.U. Instructor*, of which two, "Chinnubbie Harjo, the Evil Genius of the Creeks," and "Chinnubbie's Courtship," are lost. The remaining Chinnubbie stories, "Chinnubbie and the Owl" and "Chinnubbie Scalps the Squaws," depict the adventures of the humorous trickster storyteller who was sometimes a villain and sometimes a hero. In "Chinnubbie and the Owl," Posey portrays a storytelling contest among a group of Muscogee warriors. Chinnubbie wins the contest because he tells his story in such a way that its repetition enhances the story. In a more villainous story, "Chinnubbie Scalps the Squaws," Chinnubbie massacres and scalps the women of an enemy village, thereby robbing the village's men of their

606 Ibid., 27.
607 Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 50.
608 Ibid., 45; Murphy and Murphy, *Let My People Know*, 62.
609 Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 50-51.

most prized possessions. Posey likely modeled Chinnubbie on the Creek Chufee or Rabbit stories, in which Chufee plays the role of trickster and social reprobate.[610]

As Pokagon had done when he adapted poetry by obscure white writers, Posey sometimes satirized popular portrayals of American Indians and exposed unfair treatment of American Indians in his verse about Indian Territory politics and the Dawes Act. While Pokagon took to the stage at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, Posey criticized United States politics in the Indian Territory newspapers. During his junior year, which was his last, Posey renewed old newspaper ties to work as the Bacone reporter for the weekly Eufaula *Indian Journal.* Posey wrote reports as Chinnubbie, adding humor and wit to Bacone school news. For the most part, Posey's column covered Bacone-related news, but occasionally he prefaced his reports with poetic statements such as "Bird-songs, sunshine, poems of coming spring" and "Those delightful showers Tuesday occasioned joy." Posey also used his wit and Chinnubbie persona to address larger political issues in Indian Territory. For instance, reporting as Chinnubbie about an intertribal council convened to discuss allotment on February 19, 1894, Posey came down hard on the side of the Dawes Commission: "Indians, if you ignore the opportunity which has presented itself to you in the shadow of an imminent peril, and which if you should accept, would place you where all that pertains to your welfare would have you, you will be guilty of wrongs and grievances to your posterity." As Chinnubbie, Posey encouraged his American Indian readers to act because he predicted that Congress would treat the Indian nations worse. Posey followed up with his readers in a less serious manner when he posed the allotment question as a parody of Hamlet's famous soliloquy. Posey's political views are shielded by his Chinnubbie persona as well as the humor of the poem, which begins with an endorsement of

[610] Alexander Posey, *Chinnubbie and the Owl: Muscogee (Creek) Stories, Orations, and Oral Traditions*, ed. Matthew Wynn Sivils (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 27-28.

allotment to "End this sea of troubles?" but concludes ominously: "To allot, divide / Perchance to end in statehood; / Ah, there's the rub!"[611]

While a student at Indian University, Posey began corresponding with George J. Remsburg, a Kansas collector and newspaperman who asked Posey to assemble a collection of Creek relics. Although Posey claimed to have "no Indian relics of any kind," he promised to send Remsburg "the best modern collection I can get" and mentioned a tomahawk used in the Battle of Tohopeka or Horseshoe Bend in 1813, which was owned and "used daily" by Yadeka Harjo "as a 'pipe of peace.'"[612] Posey's collection of Creek relics for Remsburg brought him into contact with Creek traditionalists who taught him Creek history and traditions.[613] Posey presented these stories as a literary opportunity to Remsburg, writing: "The Indians have some very beautiful legends, and which if written, would certainly make an interesting book." Posey began experimenting with the genre of Creek legends, and sent two of these stories to Remsburg. Exactly which stories Posey sent to Remsburg is unknown, but they might have included "The Origin of Music according to the Creek Medicine-Men."[614] Posey also incorporated this genre into his poetry, writing legendary poems like "The Warrior's Dream," "The Comet's Tale," and "The Sea God" and publishing them in the *B.I.U. Instructor* in 1892.[615]

The narrative poem "The Warrior's Dream," recovered from the few remaining copies of the *B.I.U. Instructor*, tells of a warrior wounded in battle who anxiously contemplates the afterlife amidst "the decomposing dead." As animals feast on his compatriots, the warrior muses, "How strange is human destiny! / What miseries pay existence's fee!" Thirsty and wishing to

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611 Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 54, 75.
612 Ibid., 43.
613 Ibid., 44.
614 Ibid., 45-46.
615 Ibid., 20.

die, the warrior calls to the "Water-god" and begs "…for death or liberty— / For life or in the tomb to be." At this wish, the warrior is lifted into the air "On curls of azure fume, the most divine / That rose above the Sea-god's shrine." He marvels, "My wish was answered," as his wounds and pain vanish. The warrior flies beyond the sun and moon to the "starry worlds sublime, / In which unfading summer reigned—." In this summer realm, the warrior meets the gods, who sit on green thrones, and his former friends, who hunt "herds of bison white as polar's snow." The warrior awakens from his dream, which he believes to be a premonition of the future, in which "The ocean's brood did my home enthrall, / And hurled my youthful bloom / To death and dark eternal gloom." In response to this dream, he exclaims, "What woes infest a nation's path! / Whose end is tears though born to laugh! / This dream inscribed my epitaph!"[616] This early legendary poem evokes many of Posey's future preoccupations as a poet with death, liberty, and the future of the Creek people as seen through a prophet's vision.

After leaving the Indian University, Posey began a career in politics and was elected to the House of Warriors, the representative body of the Creek National Council, as a representative from his mother's town, Tuskegee. Although Posey's politics were not in line with the Creek majority at the time, his education at the Creek national expense made him a likely candidate for serving as clerk in public affairs. Moreover, Posey had the full support of his family (his grandfather, Pahosa Harjo Phillips had also served Tuskegee in the House of Warriors), and his extended ties to the Phillips and McCombs families of Tuskegee also contributed to his political success.[617] The newly elected principal chief Isparhecher appointed Posey to oversee the national treasury, a dangerous job that Posey performed admirably but disliked. After only a few months, Posey requested a position in the Creek educational system and was appointed as superintendent

[616] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 2-5.
[617] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 73, 77-78.

of the Creek Orphan Asylum, near Okmulgee, for the initial term of two years.[618] The Orphan Asylum housed around 100 Creek children between the ages of eight and eighteen years old.[619] Although Posey found administrative work dull and draining, it was through this position that he met his future wife, Minnie Harris, a young teacher from Farmington, Arkansas who served as the girls' matron when Posey's sister eloped with the principal.[620] The couple was married on May 9, 1896 after a brief courtship.[621] Minnie took over many of the administrative tasks of running the school for her husband, leaving him with more time to pursue his literary ambitions. Minnie recalled, "I think he admired me for my practical ways. I saved him much bother and vexation over details in looking after the school."[622] Like the Schoolcrafts, the Poseys also had a literary marriage. "He would read to me," Minnie remembered, "and he asked my opinion of all that he wrote. He also was fond of having me read to him, or him to me, evenings, discussing the things we read,—mostly poems." The Posey family's reading practices—reading aloud, collecting aphorisms, and enjoying poetry socially—resemble the reading practices of many middle-class families across Indian Territory, the United States, and Canada during the nineteenth and early-twentieth century.[623]

While superintendent of the Okmulgee orphanage, Posey also renewed his friendship with the poet George Riley Hall, a self-educated writer Posey had met at his family's Eufaula hotel while home on leave from college.[624] Posey recruited Hall as a teacher for the orphanage, and together they pursued their poetic interests through reading practices with a naturalist twist.

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[618] Posey, *Lost Creeks*, 22-23.
[619] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 79.
[620] Ibid., 81-83.
[621] Ibid., 83.
[622] Ibid.
[623] Ibid., 87.
[624] Ibid., 40.

They composed verse in the woods, once co-writing a poem from opposites sides of a waterfall, read and discussed poetry and periodical articles, and exchanged poems.[625] Posey wrote several poems to Hall, including "Lines to Hall," in which Posey entreats his friend to leave the town for the country, as "High life ill suits thy muse." Posey teases his friend, "You're not yourself when not obscure / From the gaze of friends and flattery." Posey encourages Hall to isolate himself from friends to cultivate his muse, but also prescribes that Hall try his hand at writing folklore based on the landscape of Indian Territory. Posey concludes, "Tell how that Indian hunter died / That wintry day between the hill / And frozen river; how he cried / In vain for help, and how he still // Is heard on stormy nights to cry, / And beat the wolves without avail; / And how his bones were left to dry / And scatter in that lonely vale."[626] As seen in E. Pauline Johnson's shift to folklore in the previous chapter, Indian folklore surged in popularity at the end of the nineteenth century. Posey, taking himself the advice he gave Hall, responded to this generic shift with his early poems about Indian legends, elegies for Creek leaders, and traditionalist Creek dialect poetry.

Like the Schoolcrafts, Posey, Hall, John N. Thornton, and George W. Grayson formed a salon, called the Informal Club, to further their literary pursuits. The Informal Club's only rule was that "a member must have something to say worth hearing before calling a meeting."[627] Within the United States, Posey's Informal Club resembled the literary societies and reading practices of middle- and upper-class African Americans in the nineteenth-century urban North. Throughout the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, African Americans formed literary societies that promoted literacy, a black public sphere through print and oral publications,

[625] Ibid., 92.
[626] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 47-48.
[627] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 113.

political consciousness, and resistance to racism and inequality. These societies encouraged member self-improvement but also national reform, linking African American literacy with citizenship in the United States.[628]

Posey's Informal Club also was a forerunner to social clubs and civic organizations formed by educated middle-class American Indians living in cities. In the mid-1920s, more than a hundred American Indians in Tulsa participated in the men's Apela Club. These club members, made up of middle-class businessmen and professionals, met for weekly lunches to discuss issues concerning American Indians in the city. Apela means "help" in Choctaw, and the group's members performed works of civic charity and promoted Indian causes by contributing to American Indian scholarships and educating the public about American Indian practices.[629] Another such progressive group was the Society of Oklahoma Indians, founded in Tulsa in 1924 to promote American Indian interests across the state of Oklahoma. The Society aimed to define the major problems confronting Oklahoma's American Indians and to protect their civil, social, educational, and financial rights.[630] By 1930, American Indian students and faculty organized Okla-She-de-go-ta-ga with the purpose of instilling "racial pride among the descendants of the original American" as well as "to preserve tribal traditions and legends, and to further the cause of the education of Indian Youth." In 1935, the club changed its name to the Sequoyah Club and hosted the Council of College and University Indian Clubs in Oklahoma the next year with the goal of encouraging collegiate education for American Indian students through scholarships.[631]

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[628] Elizabeth McHenry, *Forgotten Readers: Recovering the Lost History of African American Literary Societies* (Durham: Duke UP, 2002).
[629] Erik M. Zissu, *Blood Matters: The Five Civilized Tribes and the Search for Unity in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 84-85.
[630] Ibid., 95.
[631] Clara Sue Kidwell, "American Indian Studies at the University of Oklahoma," in *Native American Studies in Higher Education: Models for Collaboration between Universities and Indigenous Nations*, ed. Duane Champagne and Jay Stauss (New York: AltaMira Press, 2002), 30-31.

Native American women also formed clubs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to recover tribal knowledge and address community needs, an activism that boomed in Oklahoma during the 1920s through the 1940s. The Indian Women's Pocahontas Club of Claremore, Oklahoma was founded in 1899, and the Ohoyohoma ("red woman" in Choctaw) clubs formed in Ada, Caddo, Durant, McAlester, and Tulsa in the early twentieth century and were open to all American Indian women. The Tulsa Indian Women's Club began in 1930 and grew to eighty members representing eleven tribal nations.[632]

Posey's poem, "To Hall," originally subtitled, "An Apology for the Publication of a Poetic Epistle," demonstrates the consequences of such collaboration. Posey wrote the poem to apologize for the theft of Hall's poem by the *Indian Journal*, which acquired it from Posey and published it in the newspaper without permission.[633] Posey creates a poetic comedy from the literary theft, imagining the poem as comparable in quality to "a jug / Of Bourbon labeled 'old.'" Like a jug of aged whiskey, Hall's verses are too good for Posey to keep to himself. In the collaborative literary spirit, Posey admits, "I ne'er could selfish be— / P'raps that's why I'm threadbare! / Good wine is naught to me / Unless some friend can share." Posey shows the poem to Grayson, who soon becomes drunk on Hall's verse. Posey recalls that the editor of the *Indian Journal* John Thornton passed by on a "dunning call" to collect subscription payments. Grayson and Thornton read Hall's poem and compare it to good whiskey, and Thornton "yanked it, jug and all!" to publish without permission in the *Indian Journal*. Posey's poem concludes in disbelief: "Thief! I could smash his crown / Like a dark alley thug / He made himself and town / Drunk with the stolen jug!"[634] Posey immortalizes the plagiarizing of Hall's poem with his own

[632] Lisa M. Tetzloff, "'With Our Own Wings We Fly': Native American Women Clubs, 1899-1955," *American Educational History Journal* 34, no. 1 (2007): 69-84.
[633] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 147-48.
[634] Ibid.

poem that preserves the local element of the literary theft. Thornton stole Hall's poem to print in his local newspaper, the *Indian Journal*, and so, in a way, shared the poem as one shares food within a community.

The theft of Hall's poem seems at first an inversion of the Schoolcraft power dynamics, as here an Alabamian editor steals a white man's poem for an Indian newspaper. A closer look at the Informal Club's conduct reveals that the literary theft was part of a pattern of socializing through teasing among the men. When Thornton brought charges of undue intoxication and defamation against Grayson, the club dismissed the charges in Grayson's absence and no more was thought of it.[635] Posey was especially close with both Hall and Thornton and shared his poetry with both men. Thornton often visited Posey's home, and he and Alex read poems aloud to each other.[636] These reading and compositional practices explain why Thornton was so quick to read and abscond with Hall's poem. Through the Informal Club, Posey and his friends met face-to-face to read their poems aloud to each other and joke around. From there, sometimes the poems moved into print publication. In his own poem, Posey suggests that the publication of Hall's poem, though unauthorized, reinforces this kind of jovial cross-racial bonding that their literary group enabled. Hall's poem, Posey jokes, was simply too good to keep to himself.

Posey's Transformation of the American Indian Elegy

Like Schoolcraft, Posey composed in the western poetic form of the elegy. Just as Schoolcraft adapted the elegy's conventions to grieve for her dead son, Posey wrote elegies that paid homage to the Creek dead without incorporating them into a religious project. While the American elegiac tradition of mourning so-called vanishing Indians tends to erase American

[635] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 114.
[636] Ibid., 107.

Indian peoples and traditions by incorporating them into an "imperialist nostalgia," Posey's elegies for Creek people preserve Creek traditions and memories for future generations of Creek people.

As discussed in the Schoolcraft chapter, an elegy is a formal poem occasioned by the death of a specific person as well as a manifestation of the work of mourning.[637] The term elegy comes from ancient Greece, where it signified a specific verse form rather than a certain subject matter; an *elegion* was a poem in couplets composed of a hexameter followed by a pentameter. The Greek term *elegos* suggests sadness and lament, however, so ancient Greek elegies may also have been connected with grief.[638] It was only in the sixteenth century that the English elegy settled into its modern associations with loss and consolation.[639] At this time, the Protestant Reformation caused a departure from traditional Catholic mourning rituals of praying for the repose of the soul as a means of expressing grief, leaving Protestants without grieving rituals; post-Reformation elegies addressed this need to mourn.[640] These English elegies argued for the uniqueness of the subject and occasion, customarily including protestations of sincerity, inexpressibility, and individuality. To compose elegies that were both singular and sincere, English elegists used poetic conventions such as pastoral contexts, the myth of the vegetation deity (including sexual elements and their relation to the mourner), repetition and refrain, reiterated questions, sudden anger and cursing, the procession of mourners, traditional images of resurrection, the division of mourning among several voices, questions of contests, rewards, and inheritance, and self-consciousness regarding the elegy's performance. Along with these

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637 Peter Sacks, "The English Elegy," in *The Columbia History of American Poetry*, ed. Jay Parini and Brett Candlish Miller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 612.
638 Michael D. Hurley and Michael O'Neill, *Poetic Form: An Introduction* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2012), 100.
639 Ibid.
640 Ibid.

conventions, the elegy's defining feature is a movement from grief to consolation; without this movement, a poem is only elegiac. Elegies also involve what is called in theatre by the Greek term *anagnorisis*; that is, a moment of recognition, revelation, discovery, or disclosure. This makes elegy "the poetry of skeptical and revelatory vision for its own sake, satisfying the hunger of man to see, to know, to understand." This revelatory vision allows the elegy to "transcend the suffering that provides the occasion for its composition."[641]

As a poetic genre, the elegy faced the hurdle of religious skepticism and disbelief in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Critics have even argued that "it might make sense to end a survey of elegy on or about December 1910," because during the Romantic period the term elegy had expanded to include "almost any personal poem" with elegiac themes and tones.[642] Although modern elegies often do not offer direct consolation in the way of appeal to shared religious or communal solace, they do offer some compensation for mourning through the poetic form; that is, through the elegy's composition.[643] As Max Cavitch puts it, "Even an elegy can hardly seem to be a matter of complete indifference to its object, when the conviction that the dead live in and act through us takes so many different forms and presupposes such a wide variety of transmissive mechanisms, including heredity, tradition, possession, and the psychoanalytic concepts of incorporation and introjection."[644]

Although elegies are a western literary genre, mourning, consolation, and their expression are universal. Native American literary critic Arnold Krupat makes the case for understanding Native American elegiac expressions as a tradition separate from that of the western elegy.

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[641] Ibid., 101.
[642] Ibid., 116.
[643] Ibid., 117.
[644] Max Cavitch, *American Elegy: The Poetry of Mourning from the Puritans to Whitman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 293.

"Native American elegiac expression," he argues, "traditionally, orally, and substantially in writing as well offered mourners consolation so that they might overcome their grief and renew their will to sustain communal life."[645] Native American elegists aim to demonstrate the similarity of past and present communal losses to enable their tribal nation's survival as a people, rather than to express individual mourning.[646] Krupat explains, "For Native American communities, the irrecoverable personal uniqueness of any person is less important than his or her socially recuperable function." Thus, oral and even some written elegiac performances and expressions offer "consolation to the community so that it may recover and flourish."[647] Moreover, Native American elegies are concerned with "creation and re-creation in this world, not salvation in the next."[648]

Using these criteria, however, Krupat dismisses elegies by Schoolcraft and other early Native American writers as lacking Native American features, including "continuance or survivance."[649] Krupat argues of Native American poets from the seventeenth century to 1930, including Posey, that in "adopting the written poetic *forms* of the western tradition, they adopt its *modes of reasoning* and to some extent its Christian *perspective* as an apparently necessary consequence."[650] At a time when many Native American people identify as Christian while also participating in tribal religious traditions and ceremonies, it is harmful to imply that Christianity is only a western religious tradition. In his criticism of early Native American poets, moreover, Krupat fails to acknowledge their creative use of western forms like the elegy. As Schoolcraft

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[645] Arnold Krupat, *"That the People Might Live": Loss and Renewal in Native American Elegy* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2012), 3.
[646] Ibid., 4.
[647] Ibid.
[648] Ibid., 12.
[649] Ibid., 127-128.
[650] Ibid., 129-130.

expresses her grief as an Anishinaabe-Scotch-Irish mother at the loss of her son through her elegies, Posey honors his fellow Creek people and promotes healing in the deeply divided Creek community with his elegies for a progressive Creek politician, a medicine man, and a political conservative.

Posey wrote elegies for Creek politician Daniel N. McIntosh, a Creek medicine man known as the Alabama Prophet, and a conservative Creek from Hickory Ground, Yadeka Harjo. In these poems, Posey adapts the elegiac form to his own religious skepticism. The resulting elegies are neither Christian nor Creek, but instead offer the traditional elegy's reliance on natural patterns without the accompanying religious assurance. The effect, like Schoolcraft's elegies for her son Willy, is an elegy that remembers the beloved through continual mourning and so offers little consolation. As with Schoolcraft's elegies, I read Posey's elegies as American Indian commentary on a poetic genre that white poets often have deployed as a narrative of American Indian disappearance. While Posey's elegies mourn the Creek men who have died, they also are written by a Creek poet, sometimes in Creek dialect, and so counteract the elegiac narrative of Indian extinction and promote Creek national survival.

Creek statesman and Confederate colonel Daniel N. McIntosh had been one of the first to praise Posey's literary talents when he borrowed the theme of Posey's freshman oration, "The Indian: What of Him?" for a political speech he gave two weeks later.[651] McIntosh belonged to one of the most influential Lower Creek families, known for its leadership. His father, William McIntosh, was executed by the Creek National Council for ceding Creek land in an illegal treaty with the United States. During the American Civil War, McIntosh organized a Creek cavalry regiment to fight for the Confederate Army and led them into several battles in Indian Territory,

[651] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 47.

including the pursuit and attack of the Union-allied Creeks, which included Posey's mother, as they fled into Kansas. McIntosh's regiment gained distinction as part of General Stand Watie's units, one of the last Confederate military groups to surrender to the Union. After the Civil War, McIntosh negotiated and signed the Creek Treaty of 1866 and frequently served as a Creek tribal delegate to Washington, D.C.[652]

When McIntosh died in the spring of 1895, Posey delivered an address at his graveside and wrote the poem "Verses Written at the Grave of McIntosh, " later published in *Twin Territories* in June 1901, in the Creek leader's memory.[653] In his speech, Posey characterized McIntosh as a model for progressive American Indians, the image of the rational man described in Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*.[654] At the turn of the twentieth century, Native American intellectuals faced the problem of how to claim their rights as modern, American citizens and use those rights to fight injustice against Native peoples. To accomplish these goals, American Indian intellectuals adopted pan-Indian, reformist or progressive strategies. For instance, the Native Americans who in 1911 created and sustained the Society of American Indians thought they were best positioned to resolve the "Indian question." Native writers like Charles Eastman, Zitkála-Šá, and Luther Standing Bear manipulated roles constructed for them by whites to create a public political space from which they could address white audiences.[655] By characterizing McIntosh as a progressive Native American, Posey placed him in that category of Native American intellectual reformers. Posey enthused of McIntosh: "He could not believe the man-

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[652] Gaines, W. Craig, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew's Regiment of Mounted Rifles* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989).
[653] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 48, 72; Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 60.
[654] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 72.
[655] Kiara M. Vigil, *Indigenous Intellectuals: Sovereignty, Citizenship, and the American Imagination, 1880-1930* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2015), 3; Lucy Maddox, *Citizen Indians: Native American Intellectuals, Race, and Reform* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2005).

written book, to which the world hangs in its ignorance, as inspired and sacred. He found nothing in Nature, and in what reason taught him, to substantiate its preposterous claims. He could not believe in the religion that slew with famine, sword, and pestilence."[656]

A manuscript version of the elegy "Verses Written at the Grave of McIntosh" is dated August 10, 1897, more than two years after McIntosh's funeral.[657] In the elegy, Posey asks the "early Thrush" to "carol" a "song" "Where Oktahutche's water's rush / Along!" He commands the thrush, "Sing on, O songster ever sweet, / Sing on!" Posey describes himself "list'ning to thy ecstasy" and imagining that he hears "An echo of that voice so dear, / Thrown on the morning air by thee!" In the third stanza, Posey identifies the subject of the elegy: "An echo of the voice / Of McIntosh, my friend / And Indian brother, true, / So true, unto the end." Posey calls again on the thrush to "Carol, carol, sing, / O bird of melody / Say as sweet a thing / Of him as he of thee!" In the next stanza, Posey turns to the "Sweet wild Rose of Spring," asking that the rose "Blossom, blossom, swing / Thy flowers lovingly, …Here where his ashes lie!" Posey imagines how, as winter turns into "early sens'ous days of Spring," the "modest Grass" gently creeps to conceal "every ugly cleft, / And cover up the wreck that's left / By Winter rude and pitiless!" Posey ends the poem by asking, "O April Beauty, then, come too, / In snow-white bonnet, sister true / Of charity and tenderness / Ye oaks that spread broad branches at the Wind's behest / Be thou his monument, the watcher o'er his rest!" A manuscript containing a fragment of this elegy alternately ends: "That lift up God's blue temple dome, guard ye his rest."[658] What is striking about this elegy is that Posey positions nature as the greatest monument, surpassing any plaque or stone edifice erected by man. Moreover, he seems to argue that time is the best healer of grief.

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656 Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 72.
657 Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 59-60.
658 Ibid., 60.

Over the course of the song, Posey moves from early spring and the thrush's song to April, when spring will come in all its power to cover McIntosh's grave and the oak trees will regain their leaves and act as both monument and guard.

Posey's elegy is particularly notable given the Creek people's custom of building and maintaining grave houses over the burial sites of their ancestors. Traditionally, Creeks buried their dead under the floor of the house, although over time it became more popular to do so in a family cemetery close to the dwelling or the churchyard, if the family was Christian. Often, a small house was built over the grave, recalling the earlier custom. The grave house consists of "a small three-foot high log structure" built over the corpse. During the four days' funeral rites, the dead's spirit was supposed to linger in the area, and some people abandoned their house when an important family member died, believing that their ghost would haunt the house. Buried with the dead or placed in the house over the grave were tobacco, food, clothing, and the deceased's special belongings.[659] Perhaps because of McIntosh's association with progressive Creek Indians, however, Posey makes no mention of such burial practices, instead asserting the power of nature to console and memorialize the dead.

As a student at Bacone, Posey also published an article titled, "The Alabama Prophet," in the *B.I.U. Instructor* about a Creek medicine man who died in 1892.[660] Known only as the Alabama Prophet, this medicine man was considered by the Creek to be incredibly powerful, having, it was rumored, pulled the horns from the dreaded Tie Snake.[661] The Creek recognize three types of medicine people: *heles-hayv* or medicine makers, *owalv* or prophets, and *kerrv* or

[659] Debo, *The Road to Disappearance*, 301; Ethridge, *Creek Country*, 76; J. Leitch Wright Jr., *Creeks and Seminoles: The Destruction and Regeneration of the Muscogulge People* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 26.
[660] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 52.
[661] Ibid., 26.

"one who knows." Prophets diagnosed problems without any information, like a doctor-fortune teller.[662] Many Creek medicine men lived in the Tulledega Mountains of Posey's childhood, along with legendary creatures like the Tie Snake, the Lost Man, and Este Chupco, the wood spirit and wild animals like the feared *yahv* or wolf. Posey remembered a medicine man named Chalogee from his childhood, who often passed their house.[663] The Alabama Prophet immigrated to Indian Territory from Alabama and was considered "a master of superhuman powers," with the ability to cause rain, heal illnesses, and predict the future. A skeptic, Posey viewed the Prophet's abilities as the result of keen "observation" rather than magic. Nature, rather than formal education, was the Prophet's teacher according to Posey, and he "fancied the society of winds, rivers, trees and mountains more than he did the society of men," living with only his wife and children in the western part of the Creek Nation. Here, at this "romantic abode," the Alabama Prophet died in June of 1892 at over 70 years old.[664]

Posey reprinted this article, with an elegy titled "The Burial of the Alabama Prophet" and another poem called "Twilight," as a pamphlet published by Indian University at Bacone, Indian Territory and likely printed by Posey himself.[665] In composing "The Burial of the Alabama Prophet," Posey works out an elegiac position apart from Christian elegies or traditional Creek mourning practices. Posey insists that there is no ritual—Christian or Creek—in the mourning of the Alabama Prophet. First, Posey rejects Christianity's powers of salvation, writing, "No trumpet sounds are heard." The Alabama Prophet was no Christian, and so no trumpeting welcomes him to Heaven's gates. Denied the reassurance of an afterlife, "The dead's forth-borne in pain, / In sorrow, grief interred." Of the mourners, Posey writes, "No lays of death are sung, /

662 Lewis and Jordan, *Creek Indian Medicine Ways*, 42-43.
663 Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 25-26.
664 Alexander Posey, "The Alabama Prophet," Posey Collection, Helmerich Center, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK.
665 Ibid.

No pompous scenes are made, / No praise of mortal tongue, / No sacred rites are paid." As becomes apparent later in the poem, the Alabama Prophet demanded that no one mark his death with any kind of ceremony or mourning rituals. The mourners respect his wish with silence: "Last duties to the dead / Are paid in silent tears; / No words are lisped or said— / The coffin disappears." As a non-Christian, the Prophet is, as Posey puts it, "Exempt from fears of hell." Posey adds, "No marble decks his mound." Tied to neither Christian nor Creek cosmological visions of the afterlife, the Alabama Prophet is "Sad-lowered to his cell," his grave lacking both a Christian tombstone and a Creek grave house to signify his burial place.[666]

When he was dying, Posey tells us, the Prophet said, "I wish no lips to praise / The life that I have led, / Nor hands my tomb to raise. // Let Time his tribute pay. / With flow'ring seasons 'bove / The form returned to clay / Whose deeds were human love."[667] Although Posey rejects the Christian vision of conventional elegies, he does give the conventional elegiac tradition of natural patterns in the seasons, in which is encoded an understanding that the spirit will return. The Alabama Prophet rejects human memorials and the cosmological vision they imply in favor of the natural cycles laid bare. The Prophet reasoned, "Far better there to sleep / The endless sleep of death, / Where vines and mosses creep, / Than tombs of gold beneath."[668] In the Prophet's vision of death, there is no eternal salvation or damnation, only the decay of bodies "returned to clay" as the spirit sleeps. The wise man, according to Posey's Prophet, prefers to sleep on vines and mosses rather than golden tombs, valuing nature's monument of seasonal change over any manmade memorial. The Prophet explains that setting of the sun creates a "tomb" in "ev'ry heart." So, "Wherefore erect ME one, / When death bids me depart?" Nature

666 Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 12.
667 Ibid.
668 Ibid., 13.

provides a kind of natural mourning with its daily and seasonal patterns. The Prophet's poetic monologue dramatically ends: "O life, farewell—I go, / And leave this earthly tide; / 'Tis sweet and well to know / 'Tis rest in death to 'bide."[669] Again, Posey imagines death as rest or sleep from life's tides, with no promise of resurrection.

In the last two stanzas, the voice shifts back to that of the mourner contemplating the burial place of the Alabama Prophet. Posey repeats the image of death as "life's last still retreat" and "A sleep that all must share," going against both Christian and Creek notions of death and the afterlife. Western traditions emphasize the soul and, especially in Christianity, the soul's transcendence after death. In Creek thought, spirits often haunted their former houses. Relatives fled these spirits by abandoning or burning their house. In contrast to these spirits, Christian or Creek, the Alabama Prophet's "work's complete." Posey's elegy for the Alabama Prophet depicts death without religion and so without consolation—though also, without fear. In the final stanza, Posey entreats the Prophet, "Sleep on thou mighty one, / Thro' time and distant years, / Because of what thou'st done, / Thy name shall live in tears!"[670] Posey's ending to the poem becomes a way of thinking beyond the American poetic elegiac discussion of the soul's redemption and memorial found in conventional Christian elegies and Schoolcraft's elegy for her son but without essentializing the Prophet's death as a Creek traditionalist. In memorializing the prophet, Posey embraces his religious skepticism, which complicates consolation for his readers. For the beloved's legacy to live on in the conventional elegiac way, mourning for the Prophet must be eternal. Rather than delivering consolation to his readers, Posey's elegy offers a skeptic's view of death and memory.

[669] Ibid.
[670] Ibid.

Posey revisited the subject of death and cultural loss with his poem, "Hotgun on the Death of Yadeka Harjo," published in the *Kansas City Star* and *Sturm's Oklahoma Magazine* early in 1908.[671] Posey wrote the poem in the dialect of the "fullblood" or traditional Creeks, in the voice of Hotgun, a character from Posey's Fus Fixico letters. Posey called this dialect "Este Charte" (pronounced "stijaati" in Creek), and critics have since understood Posey's use of this dialect as a way of claiming English as a Muskogee Creek language.[672] Of Posey's literary dialect work, the Fus Fixico letters have drawn the most critical attention and praise. These fictional letters about the exploits of Creek characters functioned as "editorials for Posey's political work," as he argued for the establishment of the entity of Sequoyah as a tribally-run state rather than Indian Territory's incorporation into the state of Oklahoma.[673] Creek critic Craig Womack has joined other scholars in his criticism of Posey's poetry as "imitative and overly influenced by the romantics and popular sentimental poets of the era" with a "generic landscape based on romantic pastorals rather than a concrete naming of the natural world around the Eufaula area that Posey knew so intimately."[674] Yet Posey's dialect poems contradict this version of his development as a professional writer, containing many of the Creek elements that Womack and other critics have praised in the Fus Fixico letters. To Womack, "the switch from poetry to dialect writing underscores a major political turning point for Posey" because of its "anti-assimilationist" depiction of "Indian language, even if Indian English language." Given that Posey often wrote dialect poems, however, it seems that what Womack calls Posey's "radical transformation from poet to letter writer," which he holds responsible for Posey's move

[671] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 213.
[672] Timothy Petete and Craig S. Womack, "Thomas E. Moore's Sour Sofkee in the Tradition of Muskogee Dialect Writers," *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 18, no. 4 (2006): 2.
[673] Ibid., 1-2.
[674] Womack, *Red on Red*, 134.

"from the largely apolitical poems to the letters completely immersed in creek, Territorial, and Oklahoma politics" has been overstated.[675]

In "Hotgun on the Death of Yadeka Harjo," the Creek dialect gives the poem a conversational feel as Hotgun and his friends react to Yadeka Harjo's death as one of many conservative Creeks who recently have died. Posey met Harjo during his visit to Hickory Ground in October 1905 as clerk and Creek interpreter for the Creek Enrollment Field Party of the Dawes Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes. The Creek town of Hickory Ground was known among the Creek people as a "Snake" stronghold. The Snakes, so called because of their leader Chitto Harjo, or "Crazy Snake," maintained traditional Creek forms of government in the face of the progressive Creek Muskogee tribal government and United States encroachments. In 1900, the Snakes rallied at Hickory Ground to create their own government, complete with elections and judicial appointments. They posted signs warning non-Indian settlers to leave the area, issued death threats to Dawes commissioners, and patrolled the roads surrounding the town.[676]

Posey met Yadeka Harjo on October 10, 1905, at Hickory Grounds and described Harjo in his journal as "blind and very old—thinks he may be a hundred years old—came here from the 'Old country'—an advocate of the simple life—doesn't care for U.S. citizenship."[677] Posey's poem begins, "'Well, so,' Hotgun he say, / 'My ol'-time frien', Yadeka Harjo, he / Was died the other day, / An' they was no ol'-timer left but me.'" Hotgun goes on to list his deceased friends: "Hotulk Emathla he / Was go to be good Injin long time 'go, / An' Woxie Harjoche / Been dead ten years or twenty, maybe so."[678] Hotgun's friend Hotulk Emathla was second chief of the Muscogee Creek Nation in 1895 and had been responsible for appointing Posey as

[675] Ibid., 135.
[676] Zissu, *Blood Matters*, 25.
[677] Posey, *Lost Creeks*, 130.
[678] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 213.

superintendent of the Creek Orphan Asylum. In response to these deaths, Hotgun reasons, "'All had to die at las'; / I live long time, but now my days was few; / 'Fore long poke weeds an' grass / Be growin' all aroun' my grave house, too.'"[679] As a dialect poem, "Hotgun on the Death of Yadeka Harjo" preserves the conservative Creek dialect while also highlighting cultural loss, since the poem is written in a dialect of English rather than in the Creek language. Similarly, Hotgun assumes that his grave will not be tended because no one will continue the Creek tradition. Hotgun and his friends are the last of the traditionalists, and when they die no one will be left to continue the Creek burial traditions. The poem ends in contemplative silence: "Wolf Warrior listens close, / An' Kono Harjo pay close 'tention too; / Tookpafka Micco he almos' / Let his pipe go out a time or two."[680] Posey's poem is an act to prevent this cultural loss by creating a continuing relationship to the Creek dead. Like the Alabama Prophet's mourners whose tears never stop falling and Krupat's favored American Indian elegies, Posey's poetry opens a path to the revitalization of American Indian communities and cultures through the western poetic form meant to chronicle their disappearance: the elegy. By grappling with the problem of cultural loss through poetry, Posey transformed the elegy into a tool for American Indian survival.

Minnie's Elegy for her Husband: Editorial Changes in the *Song of the Oktahutche*

After his death, Posey's poetic legacy was directed by his wife Minnie, who decided to try to publish a book of his poetry to raise money for their family's support. In doing so, Minnie modified many of Posey's poems to make them more palatable for a Christian audience. Initially titled, "Song of the Oktahutche, and Other Poems," Minnie's collection of Posey's poems

[679] Ibid.
[680] Ibid.

included 105 poems. She submitted the manuscript to three major publishers: Houghton Mifflin, Scribners, and McClurg.[681] All three publishers rejected the manuscript, and Minnie wrote to her husband's friend at the *Kansas City Star*, Frederick S. Barde: "I have had no assistance in preparing or collecting the poems and I feel so incompetent."[682] A former director of the Kansas State Historical Society, William E. Connelley, stepped in to secure the Topeka, Kansas publisher Crane and Company for the book, and Connelley wrote a biographical essay introducing Posey for the book.[683] Far from providing for the family as Minnie hoped, sales of the book were poor; Crane and Company destroyed the stock and plates and returned the copyright to Minnie.[684]

In a letter to Barde, Minnie was modest about her editorial process. "Of course I have not attempted any changes or made any corrections," she assured him, "Mr. Posey was very modest & placed little value on any thing that he wrote. Many of the little verses that to me are very pretty—I am sure he would not have consented to their being included in a volume."[685] Minnie's characterization of her editorial process as unobtrusive does not accurately reflect the differences that scholars recently have discovered between Posey's manuscript and periodical poetry and the versions that ended up in Minnie's 1910 edition of his poetry. In addition to selecting those works she found "pretty," Minnie also altered poems, from changing a title to switching lines and stanzas to creating seemingly new poems. Knowledge of these poetic editions relies on Minnie's scrapbooks of Posey's work as well as early twentieth-century newspapers, periodicals, and manuscripts of the poems. Indian Territory newspapers, hard to find today, provide an

[681] Ibid., xxi.
[682] Ibid., xxiii.
[683] Ibid., xxxiii.
[684] Ibid.
[685] Ibid., xxxiii-iv.

unreliable archive of Posey's poetic publication because they were produced on bad paper, in short runs.[686] It is difficult for scholars to verify whether Minnie made some of these changes, knowing that Posey often published different versions of his poems throughout his lifetime.

Matthew Wynn Sivils's edition of Posey's poems, *Song of the Oktahutche,* illuminates Minnie's editorial hand in the 1910 edition of Posey's poems. Sivils writes of Minnie's editorial changes: "She sometimes selected older versions that [Posey] had since revised or introduced transcription errors, and in some cases even altered poems to her liking."[687] Sivils cites changes to Posey's manuscripts in Minnie's handwriting to prove that she sometimes changed titles, divided poems, and rearranged stanzas. He speculates that Minnie was trying to "improve the poems—at least in her opinion," and also made changes "from her dislike of Posey's religious skepticism."[688] Sivils concludes that Minnie may even have destroyed several pages from Posey's poetry ledger, perhaps because "those works disclosed beliefs she found unacceptable."[689]

Whether or not these last accusations against Minnie are true, Minnie Posey altered many of her husband's poems for the 1910 edition of his works in ways that may have affected Posey's later poetic reception. Minnie retitled a substantial number of poems for various reasons from the mundane (changing a poem titled "June" to "Midsummer" because there was already a poem titled "June") to supplying a title where none was given ("Drifting Apart," "The Poet's Song," "Nature's Blessings," and "A Rhapsody") to changing a title in ways that substantially change the poem's meaning ("Our Deeds" changed to "A Simile," "Trysting" changed to "Then and Now," and "All the While" changed to "Let Men Dispute"). Sivils concludes that many of these

686 Ibid., xxxi.
687 Ibid., xxiv.
688 Ibid.
689 Ibid.

changes were made for religious reasons, but given the subject of many of the poems, the preservation of a different kind of reputation may have been another reason.

Many of these poems address love, and as Posey's widow Minnie had a vested interest in the portrayal of her husband's emotions in such poems.[690] To an untitled poem manuscript dated November 7, 1897 and written on Creek Orphan Asylum stationery, where Posey was superintendent, Minnie supplied a title in pencil, "A Rapsody" [sic]. In the poem, Posey describes his desire to journey south: "Oh, to loiter where / The sea breaks white / In wild delight / And throws her kisses evermore / A slave unto the palm-set shore!" The next stanza further depicts this dream: "Oh, to wander where / The gray moss clings, / And south wind sings, / Forever, low, enchantingly, / Of islands girdled by the sea!" The last stanza, however, turns desires and dreams into intention: "Oh, I'll journey back / Some day; some day / I'll go away; / Forsake my land of mountain pine / To win the heart that captured mine!"[691] During the early twentieth century, "rhapsody" referred both to the specific form of an epic poem, coming from the Greek literary tradition, short enough to be recited in one sitting, and an "effusive utterance or piece of writing, often disconnected or lacking in logical argument."[692] By titling Posey's dream-like poem about leaving his family to reconnect with a lost love "A Rhapsody," Minnie both elevates the poem by association with the Greek tradition and defuses its sense of an extramarital affair (or at least the desire for one) by aligning it with a literary form known for its illogicality. As rhapsody, Posey's desire to abandon his family for an old lover is merely a frivolous dream.

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690 Prudie Patillo's earlier cited 1928 article on Posey alludes to rumors that Minnie was not Posey's first love, citing his poem "June" as evidence of Posey's love for another woman who, "delighted, kept the poem, and after Posey had gone she carried it to Irvin, who published it in his 'Ranch and Ranger.'"

691 Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 56; Posey, Folder 90, Posey Collection, Helmerich Center, Gilcrease.

692 "rhapsody, n.," OED Online, March 2017, Oxford University Press, http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/view/Entry/165133?redirectedFrom=rapsody.

Minnie more substantially altered several other poems, not only by adding or changing titles, but by dividing and combining poems from her husband's manuscript drafts. In the case of a poem Posey titled "Distant Music," Minnie divided the stanzas of one draft of the poem into two other poems, which she titled "Mother's Song" and "At the Siren's Call."[693] The poems appear together in Posey's manuscript, written on his Eufaula Superintendent of Public Instruction stationery, with the addition of titles in Minnie's hand. By changing the poem's perspective from that of Posey to that of a mother, Minnie stripped the poem of association with sexual longing outside of marriage. She also excised the most sexual lines of the poem and contained them within a poem and title of her own creation. She took stanzas three and six from the manuscript poem and titled them, "At the Siren's Call," incorporating her husband's desire for other women into the story of the sirens, mythological creatures who lead men astray with their beautiful songs. That poem then reads: "I fancy that I sit beside / The shore of slumbers' phantom sea / And see sweet visions die, and hear / The siren voices calling me. // Am I a shell cast on the shore / Of Time's illimitable sea, / To hear and whisper evermore / The music of Eternity?"[694]

Minnie also created a poem that she titled "A Valentine" from a combination of Posey's manuscript poems "Her Beauty" and "To a Face Above the Surf." "A Valentine," a poem title which does not exist in Posey's manuscripts, combines the first nine lines of "Her Beauty" with the first stanza from "To a Face Above the Surf." By merging these poems and calling them "A Valentine," Minnie casts the verses firmly into the genre of love poetry, making it appear that Posey wrote this poem specifically for his wife for Valentine's Day. In manuscript versions,

693 Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 68-69.
694 Alexander Posey, *The Poems of Alexander Lawrence Posey*, ed. Minnie H. Posey (Topeka: Crane and Company, 1910), 145.

these poems are vague about the object of the poet's devotion. The "face above the surf" reads as an anonymous woman swimming in the ocean, with the final line reading: "To clasp thee in a wild embrace; / To press thy pink lips rapturously; / To look upon thee face to face, / I would that I could be the sea!"[695] In the case of "Her Beauty," the final stanza, which is also the most sexually explicit, was crossed out in the manuscript. Posey describes this woman as a garden that "No wall hath circled yet, / Nor dews have wet, / A red rose like her lips." The final, crossed-out stanza becomes more emphatic and apostrophic: "She's God's improvement of / Her sex. O Love! / O Life! O Birds! O Light! / O Winds! O Night! / Ye are Heaven here / When she is near!"[696]

Minnie's editorial changes emphasize Christian morals and romantic love over Posey's engagement with local Indian Territory politics and people, realigning his poetry with the western poetic conventions from which his religiously skeptical Creek elegies depart. While expedient for the time, such whitewashing discourages current readers from recognizing the political and cultural relevance of Posey as a turn-of-the-century Creek poet. Even Posey's biographer, Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr., characterizes Posey's literary career as "marked by false starts and unfulfilled potential."[697] Elsewhere, Littlefield derides Posey and Hall's close friendship as having "reinforced earlier reading and writing habits that limited the range of his poetic achievement," by which he means, a "preference for the American and British romantic poets of the early nineteenth century and their imitators in later decades, such as Bret Harte, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Joaquin Miller, and James Whitcomb Riley."[698] Yet Miller, Riley, Aldrich, and Harte were popular American genteel, local color, and dialect writers at the turn of

[695] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 145.
[696] Ibid., 71.
[697] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 8.
[698] Ibid., 93.

the twentieth century.[699] This style of poetry only appeared passé in comparison to the modernist poets of the same generation who gained fame in the wake of World War I. Through an editing process that aligned Posey's poetry with genteel poetry, Minnie unknowingly helped condemn Posey's poetry to the same declining popularity as genteel poetry in 1910, when Crane and Company of Topeka, Kansas published *The Poems of Alexander Lawrence Posey Collected and Arranged by Mrs. Minnie H. Posey*.

Conclusion

Scholars have remarked that many of Posey's poems imagine death, particularly death by drowning. Even a poem Posey wrote to celebrate his son Yahola Irving Posey's birth, "To Our Baby, Laughing," contains a morbid reflection on his own passing.[700] "If I were dead, sweet one, / So innocent, / I know you'd laugh the same / In merriment, / And pat my pallid face / With chubby hands and fair, / And think me living as / You'd tangle up my hair."[701] Here Posey imagines his son cheerfully playing with his corpse, tangling his hair and patting his pale face. The natural patterns that Posey elsewhere traces in seasonal changes here juxtapose birth and death. In the next stanza, Posey contemplates his burial and reasons that his infant son would not remember him: "If I were dead, loved one, / So young and fair, / If I were laid beneath / The grasses there, / My face would haunt you for / A while—a day maybe— / And then you would forget, / And not remember me."[702] In contrast to Creek thought, where a dead family member could haunt a house and cause the family either to abandon or burn it, the haunting Posey pictures is brief.

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[699] John Timberman Newcomb, "The 'Genteel Tradition' and Its Discontents," in *The Cambridge History of American Poetry*, ed. Alfred Bendixen and Stephen Burt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
[700] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 49.
[701] Ibid.
[702] Ibid.

Posey's death has had a much greater haunting effect on American Indian literature than the scenario he imagines in his poem to his son. Posey's death by drowning in the North Canadian River, called the Oktahutche by Creeks, on May 27, 1908, has been the subject of much debate. Traditional Creeks attest that his death was retribution for his collaboration with the Dawes Commission as a fieldworker and agent. Observers also wrote that Posey let go of the hands that held him, leading to speculations of suicide. Posey's status as a writer, Dawes Commission agent, and sometime Creek politician in the Creek Nation and in Indian Territory more generally made his death into a spectacle that reportedly over a hundred-people witnessed and, after, speculated about endlessly.[703] Posey's early death demanded an explanation, and the people of Indian Territory, in the wake of Oklahoma statehood, which was enacted less than a year before on November 16, 1907, eagerly supplied their own reasons.

Many Creek people shared the opinion of Posey's Creek friend Charles Gibson, who wrote, "But as the red men say, it was in the beginning ordained that he should retire from this life as he did."[704] Others, including a few of Posey's relatives in the Tuskegee and Artussee communities, felt betrayed by Posey's dealings with the Dawes Commission and land companies in Indian Territory. In his death shortly after Oklahoma statehood they saw a sign, one distant relative saying that Posey's death was perhaps a blessing.[705] Contemporary Creek literary critic Craig Womack notes that even today, "Some Creek traditionalists believe that because of [Posey's] unsavory activities, Posey died an early death, drowning in the very river, the Oktahutche, or the Canadian, that he so dearly loved."[706] Womack elaborates: "Some Creek traditionalists believe that Posey's death came about as the result of his real estate dealings after

[703] Littlefield, *Alex Posey*, 4.
[704] Ibid., 251.
[705] Ibid., 254.
[706] Womack, *Red on Red*, 132.

Oklahoma statehood when Posey was beginning to become involved in the sale of Indian allotments. For these reasons, some say, Posey was drowned by Tie-Snake, swallowed up by the very river he loved, the Oktahutche."[707]

Applying cosmological reasoning to the death of a religious skeptic seems like a way of controlling the narrative of Posey's life, just as Minnie tried to do with her book. Rather than judging Posey's literary impact by his death, I would like to conclude this chapter by tracing his literary survival first through elegies by Posey's American Indian contemporaries and then through the work of a fellow Creek poet Joy Harjo. Although the engagement of Posey's contemporaries with the American elegiac form varied, Harjo followed Posey in writing poems that broke the generic norms of the American Indian elegy.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, American Indian poets wrote elegies in the dominant style of the lament for American Indians. In 1878, for example, Chickasaw writer and deputy U.S. marshal James Harris Guy wrote "The Lament of Tishomingo" and a poem that begins, "The white man wants the Indian's home," in letters to the editor of *The Council Fire* and former Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs Alfred B. Meacham.[708] Both poems bemoan American injustices against American Indians, with a defiant tone and message not often found in white American elegies for supposedly vanishing American Indians. Cherokee writer Mabel Washbourne Anderson, the niece of John Rollin Ridge, frequently contributed to Indian Territory newspapers and magazines and published a biography of her distant cousin Cherokee Confederate brigadier general Stand Watie. Among her publications, Anderson composed an elegy in the style of white American laments for American Indians, "Nowita, the Sweet Singer."

[707] Ibid., 133.
[708] *Changing is Not Vanishing: A Collection of Early American Indian Poetry to 1930*, ed. Robert Dale Parker (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 141-144.

The narrative frame describes the poem as "the pathetic story of Nowita, a sweet singing Cherokee maiden, a pupil in the Female Seminary, and a young professor from the East, who taught in the Cherokee Male Seminary." This narrative thus situates the poem as an elegy to American Indians in the romantic style of Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha*, which the author references with the allusion, "this is the forest primeval."[709] The story turns tragic when the young professor leaves Nowita, vowing to remain true and return to her, but disappearing for good. Nowita's grandmother urges her to marry a young Cherokee man, cautioning, "Wait not for the fickle stranger, / Weep not for you fair-faced lover— / Awful queer folks are the white folks."[710] Nowita, however, refuses to marry another and grows old as her people vow to kill her lover should he return. Nowita dies, but "Still her sad, unhappy story / Is repeated to the traveler." The poem ends with a bit of local color: "If you go alone at twilight / To the cave beside the river / Where the lovers in the evening / Rowed together in the gloaming, / You may hear the repetition / Of the songs as they were uttered, / By this charming Indian maiden, / By Nowita, the sweet singer."[711]

Mdwakanton Sioux writer Irene C. Beaulieu revised this tradition of Indian elegies with her sarcastic poem, signed with the penname Wenotah, "Poor Lo," which appeared in her coedited 1916 book *Tributes to a Vanishing Race*. The title comes from the newspaper slang of referring to American Indians as "Poor Lo" or "Lo" in the nineteenth-century United States, after Alexander Pope's line from *An Essay on Man:* "Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind / Sees God in clouds or hears him in the wind."[712] Beaulieu's elegy "Poor Lo" takes a casual tone in mocking the seriousness of white American elegies for supposedly vanishing Indians. For

[709] Ibid., 242-251.
[710] Ibid., 248.
[711] Ibid., 249.
[712] Ibid., 284-286.

instance, the first stanza reads, "Poor Lo's sun is setting in the west, / Where once he roamed free at his best. / The buffalo he hunted on the plain,— / His life was intended to sustain,— / Driven are now away forever, / By white man's avarice, as ever." While traditional American elegies for Indians carefully avoid the question of cause or blame, Beaulieu makes clear that "Wa-si-cun," or white men, are responsible for American Indian suffering, having stolen their land and food sources. The poem's fifth stanza makes these accusations explicitly political: "America's dealings with her wards / Have oft been sung by many bards. / Injustice could have been averted, / But treaties made have been diverted / With motives low, unjust, and base / To benefit only the alien race."[713] Like Johnson or Posey, however, Beaulieu stops short of declaring that American Indians have all died, ending the poem with the tragic deaths of "Our fathers." In tone and in its political content, Beaulieu's elegy "Poor Lo" departs from the traditional American elegiac tradition by producing outrage rather than comfort at American Indian suffering and death. In this way, Beaulieu takes up the Indian Territory tradition of changing poetic genres to suit contemporary political concerns and local publication contexts.

The Cherokee writer Lynn Riggs, best known as a playwright whose play *Green Grow the Lilacs* inspired the hit Broadway musical *Oklahoma!*, published a collection of his poems called *The Iron Dish* in 1930. This book includes Riggs' elegy, "For a Silent Poet." In the poem, the speaker addresses the reader about a poet's death.[714] Riggs begins, "How can she be so quiet, she / Whose voice has never been subdued / At the shut door? No misery / Cries from her grave's quietude." Throughout the short, three-quatrain poem, Riggs demands to know how the dead poet can rest so silent, "Who long in ecstasy has lain / Under the oak, the ghostly beech— /

[713] Ibid.
[714] Ibid., 350.

By a white star and a cloud's disdain / Troubled into speech?"[715] As in Posey's elegies, Riggs' elegy "For a Silent Poet" contemplates death and nature without giving the reader the religious comfort of traditional Christian elegies.

Joy Harjo's elegy, "For Anne Mae Pictou Aquash, Whose Spirit is Present Here and in the Dappled Stars (for we remember the story and must tell it again so we may all live)" builds upon this Indian Territory tradition of political elegy by juxtaposing seasonal patterns with remembrance of the brutal murder of Aquash, a Micmac American Indian Movement activist.[716] Harjo begins the elegy, "Beneath a sky blurred with mist and wind, / I am amazed as I watch the violet / heads of crocuses erupt from the stiff earth / after dying for a season." She compares the rebirth of the crocuses to waking up in the morning after being in "the next world" during dreams. Harjo explains, "It is the way in the natural world to understand the place / the ghost dancers named / after the heart/breaking destruction.[717]" As in Posey's elegies, in Harjo's elegy for Aquash, nature's patterns signify and preserve memories of historical violence.

"Anna Mae," Harjo calls, "everything and nothing changes." As with Posey's use of natural patterns, here consolation is predicated on Native American survival and remembrance. She speaks to Aquash, "You are the shimmering young woman / who found her voice, / when you were warned to be silent, or have your body cut away / from you like an elegant weed." Harjo continues, "You are the one whose spirit is present in the dappled stars," indicating a religious belief Posey's elegies lack. Writing this elegy ten years after Aquash's murder, Harjo recalls how she initially heard about the murder in Oklahoma or New Mexico. At that time, she recalls, "how the wind howled and pulled everything down / in a righteous anger." Harjo notes,

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[715] Ibid.
[716] Joy Harjo, *In Mad Love and War* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1990), 7-8.
[717] Ibid.

"(It was the women who told me) and we understood wordlessly / the ripe meaning of your murder." At the end of the elegy, Harjo connects the spring flowers to her feelings at Aquash's murder: "As I understand ten years later after the slow changing / of the seasons / that we have just begun to touch / the dazzling whirlwind of our anger, / we have just begun to perceive the amazed world the ghost dancers / entered / crazily, beautifully."[718]

In another poem, Harjo recalls, "There are many roads to knowledge in this world. I reminded a student once who tried to force his narrow religious opinion on me and the class that there are as many ways to God as there are to poetry."[719] In Indian Territory at the turn of the twentieth century, Posey created one of those paths to religiously skeptical American Indian poetry. Though lauded by his contemporaries, Posey's pre-modernist style of poetry has left him largely forgotten in American Indian literature, even with the flourishing of American Indian poetry in the American Indian Renaissance. The practice of these kinds of poetic appropriations by Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Simon Pokagon, E. Pauline Johnson, and Alex Posey created and sustained a way of relating to genre that remains powerful for indigenous poets in North America today. At the end of the twentieth century, Harjo wrote about her poetic craft: "I know you can turn a poem into something else."[720] Almost a hundred years earlier, Posey wrote to Sequoyah, "Thy genius shaped a dream into a deed."[721]

[718] Ibid.
[719] Joy Harjo, *A Map to the Next World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 62.
[720] Harjo, *In Mad Love*, 59.
[721] Posey, *Song of the Oktahutche*, 167-168.

Coda

In a poem titled, "What Is a Poem?" in *After and Before the Lightning,* Acoma poet Simon Ortiz writes, "Picture a man going from place / to place, finding a bone here, / a skull there, a chunk of stone, / a shard of plate, an old calendar, / a rusty bolt, a piece of cloth. / What is a poem but that. / What is a poem but that?"[722]

Ortiz's depiction of the process of writing a poem as an act of collecting seemingly unrelated material objects from different places resembles modernist western creative methods using found materials such as collage, montage, and bricolage. In *Collage of Myself,* Matt Miller argues that the nineteenth-century American poet Walt Whitman pioneered such creative techniques to "transform a diverse array of text, including diary-like observations, reading notes, clippings from newspapers and scholarly articles, and language stolen or paraphrased from books, into the breakthrough poems of *Leaves of Grass*."[723] As this dissertation has shown, however, American Indian poets also have employed these techniques since the early nineteenth century.

Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's poetry appeared in letters as well as manuscript magazines, and her elegies for her son transformed the western elegy into an Anishinaabe literary vehicle for mourning. Like Whitman, Simon Pokagon stole other writers' language but used these insurgent practices of appropriation to criticize and revise colonialist American poetry. His birchbark pamphlet and novel *Queen of the Woods* gain significance as "object lessons" in Pokagon's literary archive. During a career spent experimenting with various literary forms, E. Pauline

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[722] Simon Ortiz, "What Is a Poem?", in *After and Before the Lightning* (Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1994), 66-67.

[723] Matt Miller, *Collage of Myself: Walt Whitman and the Making of Leaves of Grass* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), xv.

Johnson helped invent a different kind of modernist poetry, which challenged one of modernism's foundational notions that indigenous peoples were trapped in pre-modernity. Alex Posey's skeptical elegies, dialect poems, and political newspaper verse drew upon both western and Creek literary forms. Moreover, in the context of Whitman and other writers' challenges to poetry's Christian foundations, Posey refused organized religion within both the Creek and American national contexts.

From Sand Creek, Simon Ortiz's book-length poem first published in 1981, turns to Whitman as a poetic predecessor in an extended meditation on the United States' massacre of Cheyenne people at Sand Creek in southeastern Colorado on November 29, 1864. During the Sand Creek massacre, the commanding officer Colonel Chivington ordered his troops to "'kill and scalp all, big and little; nits make lice,'" and over 700 heavily armed American men killed 105 women and children and 28 men.[724] In an interview, Ortiz explains that with *From Sand Creek* he chose to write a visibly western form of poetry. He notes:

> The source of *From Sand Creek* as a poem was inspired and maybe in some ways limited by the intellectual tradition. I also wanted to write a poem that was a real poem, that could not be mistaken for anything but a poem, and therefore it was a departure in terms of style. It wasn't story; story is very distinct, a characteristic of a good journey. But with *From Sand Creek*, I wanted it to be a poem that looked like a poem.[725]

As Ortiz explains the reasoning behind *From Sand Creek*'s formal departure from his other books of poetry, he moves from ontology to superficiality or appearance in his efforts to define poetry as practice and interpretation. In this account, *From Sand Creek* represents Ortiz's desire "to write a poem that was a real poem, that could not be mistaken for anything but a poem." First appealing to ontology, Ortiz characterizes *From Sand Creek* as "a real poem," but then clarifies

[724] Simon Ortiz, *From Sand Creek* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981); Ed Folsom, *Walt Whitman's Native Representations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 67.
[725] Simon Ortiz, Kathleen Manley, and Paul W. Rea, "An Interview with Simon Ortiz," *Journal of the Southwest* 31, no. 3 (1989): 373.

that what counts as a "real poem" depends upon its reception by readers who can "be mistaken" in their categorization of genres like poems, especially poems written by indigenous writers. Ortiz also hints in this interview at what other genres he expects readers to "mistake" his poems for, clarifying: "It wasn't story." Readers commonly assume that the only "real" American Indian genre is "story," specifically stories like those E. Pauline Johnson wrote in *Legends of Vancouver*. Understanding this reception history, Ortiz counters, "But with *From Sand Creek,* I wanted it to be a poem that looked like a poem." Even writing in 1981, almost a century after the indigenous poets in this dissertation made the decisions to write poems that challenged western genres and historical misconceptions of indigenous peoples as premodern, Ortiz defends his decision to Native American literature scholars to write "a poem that looked like a poem." Although in Ortiz's case, Native North American poetry had come into style again, the pressures of the assumptions that readers and scholars make about indigenous poetry continue to challenge indigenous writers' literary decisions.

Towards the end of this "poem that looked like a poem," Ortiz addresses Whitman as a poetic predecessor. The preceding prose gloss reads, "When I was younger—and America was young too in the 19th century—Whitman was a poet I loved, and I grew older. And Whitman was dead."[726] In verse, Ortiz speaks to Whitman as a fellow poet whose work he once admired, and asks Whitman to reckon with the atrocities committed by his fellow Americans in their expansive movement across continents and oceans.

On the facing page, Ortiz writes, "O Whitman / spoke for them, / of course, / but he died." Whitman's death has left his fellow Americans bereft and without guidance as to their expansive movements. Ortiz explains, "That shed their sorrow / and shame / and cultured their

[726] Ortiz, *From Sand Creek*, 80.

anxiety." Without Whitman, Americans committed atrocities without "sorrow" or "shame" and instead developed their "anxiety." Ortiz continues, "They spoke an eloquent arrogance / by which they thought / they would be freed." Poetry cannot save these Americans; their "eloquent arrogance," Ortiz implies, will not save them. He elaborates, "In their theaters, / in their factories, / in their wars. / They wasted / their sons and uncles / as they came westward, / sullenly insisting / that perhaps, O Whitman, / O Whitman, he was wrong / and had mis-read the goal / of mankind." Americans waste the lives of "their sons and uncles" as they "came westward" insisting that their beloved Whitman was wrong about the "goal / of mankind."

After establishing this image of Manifest Destiny as expansive American capitalism, Ortiz asks, "And Whitman / who thought they were his own— / did he sorrow? / did he laugh? / Did he, did he?"[727] In his poem, which uses Whitman as a touchstone, Ortiz argues that Americans have departed from Whitman's goals with their insistence on violent expansion at all costs. Ed Folsom guesses that for Ortiz Whitman was both "the spiritual leader of America's destructive urgings of manifest destiny and the leader of the resistance to those destructive impulses, the poet of love and nature."[728] In the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman similarly appears confused about American Indians, asking, "The friendly and flowing savage….Who is he? / Is he waiting for civilization or past it and mastering it?"[729] A contradictory figure, Whitman represents both a poetic predecessor and an inciter of violence against indigenous peoples for Ortiz. Confronting Whitman at the end of the poem, Ortiz is not sure if Whitman would mourn or celebrate the Sand Creek massacre and violence against indigenous peoples as he embraced American expansionism.

[727] Ibid., 81.
[728] Folsom, *Walt Whitman's Native Representations*, 67.
[729] Walt Whitman, quoted in Ibid., 58.

Perhaps inspired by Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha*, in a manuscript notebook from the late 1850s, Whitman famously wrote of his plans for a "poem of the aborigines" that would embody "every principal aboriginal trait and name." Folsom writes, "To give Indians a *line* in the song of America seemed to be Whitman's continual motivation, to absorb them into the American song before they vanished forever, to preserve them in English words." Thankfully, Whitman never wrote that poem, but Native North Americans did write many of their own poems, and, for the most part, they did so in English using Western poetical genres.[730]

In the collection *Speaking for the Generations: Native Writers on Writing*, Native American writers share their experiences with writing as connected to tribal and indigenous survival. Ortiz explains, "I chose to be an Indian writer using the English language since that was the predominant one that Indian people faced."[731] He cautions, "Using the English language is a dilemma and pretty scary sometimes, because it means letting one's mind go willfully—although with soul and heart in shaky hand, literally—into the Western cultural and intellectual context, a condition and circumstance that one usually avoids at all costs on most occasions."[732] In the same collection, Allison Adelle Hedge Coke describes her writing process differently: "Today, when I write poetry I sometimes incorporate Native ways of describing even while I am writing in English. This enhances the word and makes the writing both comfortable and startling."[733] She elaborates on this process using a quilting metaphor: "In my own writing I hope to use words in

[730] Ibid., 70; 77.
[731] Simon J. Ortiz, "Introduction: Wah Nuhtyah-yuu Dyu Neetah Tyahstih (Now It Is My Turn to Stand)," in *Speaking for the Generations: Native Writers on Writing*, ed. Simon J. Ortiz (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998), xvi.
[732] Ibid., xvi.
[733] A.A. Hedge Coke, "Seeds," in *Speaking for the Generations: Native Writers on Writing*, ed. Simon J. Ortiz (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998), 99.

such a way that the images build upon each other in a fashion not unlike patterned cloth or quilting."[734] Hedge Coke notes:

> Each time I sit down to work, I am moved by the patterns in my life and by the patterns shaping my relations. As I said earlier, the people we came from seem to me like beads woven together, patterned and woven into a whole people…All creative work feeds other creative work. The memories I have imprinted in my mind from making bark and pine-needle baskets and from weaving fabric are significant for my writing today. These weaving skills may produce layered imagery, a tangle of raw material shaped into something tangible through gentle strokes of the fingers and the mind's eye.[735]

Almost a century apart, Johnson and Hedge Coke use the same gendered indigenous metaphor for poetry composition: weaving. Moreover, for both Johnson and Hedge Coke, this weaving metaphor recalls their familial and tribal relations. As Johnson dedicates *The White Wampum* to her parents, Hedge Coke uses an understanding of patterns, of relations, to "incorporate Native ways of describing" while "writing in English."

In the poem "Making Quiltwork," Ortiz also takes up this craft metaphor. The poem begins, "Like the coat of many colors, the letter, quilts, / all those odds and bits we live by, we have come / to know. Folks here live by the pretty quilts / they make, more than make actually, more than pretty." As an artistic process, quilting is similar to collage in that the quilter collects scraps from various projects, "all those odds and bits we live by," and arranges them into a beautiful pattern. Ortiz explains, however, that for indigenous peoples, quilting is more than creation for beauty's sake. Ortiz continues, "They are histories, their lives and their quilts. / Indian people who have been scattered, sundered / into odds and bits, determined to remake wholecloth." Indigenous people make quilts that are histories. Indigenous lives themselves are also quilts, "scattered, sundered" like cloth scraps, but "determined to remake wholecloth," to reestablish themselves as a people. Ortiz concludes the poem:

[734] Ibid., 112.
[735] Ibid., 115.

> Nothing quits. It changes many times, sometimes
> to something we don't want, but we again gather
> the pieces, study them, decide, make decisions
> yes and fit them to color, necessity, conditions,
> beauty, and start again. Our lives are quilts,
> letters odds and bits, but always the loving
> thread through them, the compassionate knowledge
> that what we make is worth it and will outlast
> anything that was before and will be worthy
> of any people's art, endeavor, and final triumph.
>
> Here, look at my clothes, quilts, coats of many colors![736]

Ortiz imagines indigenous peoples as cloth scraps that never vanish although they change many times, "sometimes / to something we don't want," but always reassembled through careful "study" and "decisions" into a quilt of beauty that allows them to "start again" as a people. Art is at the center of this continual process of becoming as the "loving / thread" that runs through the quilts, "the compassionate knowledge / that what we make is worth it and will outlast / anything that was before and will be worthy / of any people's art, endeavor, and final triumph." At the end of the twentieth century, Ortiz proudly exclaims as an indigenous poet, "Here, look at my clothes, quilts, coats of many colors!" Indigenous poets continue to comment on the practice and form of poetry while making formal choices that challenge critical narratives of American poetry's history.

[736] Simon Ortiz, "Making Quiltwork," in *Returning the Gift: Poetry and Prose from the First North American Native Writers' Festival*, ed. Joseph Bruchac (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994), 220.

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